1247

MARRIAGE.

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A NOVEL.

"Life consists not of a series of illustrious actions; the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities—in the performance of daily duties—in the removal of small inconveniencies—in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small and frequent interruption."

Johnson.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

> "In age, in infancy, from others aid
> Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind,
> That nature's first, last lesson."
>
> YOUNG.

THE neglected daughter of Lady Juliana Douglas, experienced all the advantages naturally to be expected from her change of situation. Her watchful aunt superintended the years of her infancy, and all that a tender and judicious mother *could*

do—all that most mothers *think* they do—she performed. Mrs. Douglas, though not a woman either of words or systems, possessed a reflecting mind, and a heart warm with benevolence towards every thing that had a being; and all the best feelings of her nature were excited by the little outcast, thus abandoned by her unnatural parent. As she pressed the unconscious babe to her bosom, she thought how blest she should have been, had a child of her own thus filled her arms; but the reflection called forth no selfish murmurs from her chastened spirit. While the tear of soft regret trembled in her eye, that eye was yet raised in gratitude to heaven for having called forth those delightful affections which might otherwise have slumbered in her heart.

Mrs. Douglas had read much, and reflected more; and many faultless theories of education had floated in her mind. But her good sense soon discovered how unavailing all theories were, whose founda-

tions rested upon the inferred wisdom of the teacher; and how intricate and unwieldy must be the machinery for the human mind, where the human hand alone is to guide and uphold it. To engraft into her infant soul the purest principles of religion, was therefore the chief aim of Mary's preceptress. The fear of God was the only restraint imposed upon her dawning intellect; and from the Bible alone was she taught the duties of morality—not in the form of a dry code of laws, to be read with a solemn face on Sundays, or learned with weeping eyes as a week-day task—but adapted to her youthful capacity by judicious illustration, and familiarized to her taste by hearing its stories and precepts from the lips she best loved. Mrs. Douglas was the friend and confidant of her pupil: to her all her hopes and fears, wishes and dreads, were confided; and the first effort of her reason was the discovery, that to please her aunt, she must study to please her Maker.

"L'inutilité de la vie des femmes, est la premier source de leurs désordres."

Mrs. Douglas was fully convinced of the truth of this observation, and that the mere selfish cares and vulgar bustle of life are not sufficient to satisfy the immortal soul, however they may serve to engross it.

A portion of Mary's time was therefore devoted to the daily practice of the great duties of life; in administering, in some shape or other, to the wants and misfortunes of her fellow-creatures, without requiring from them that their virtue should have been immaculate, or expecting that their gratitude should be everlasting.

"It is better," thought Mrs. Douglas, "that we should sometimes be deceived by others, than that we should learn to deceive ourselves; and the charity and good will that is suffered to lie dormant, or feed itself on speculative acts of beneficence, for want of proper objects to call it into use, will soon become the corroding rust that

will destroy the best feelings of our nature."

But, although Mary strenuously applied herself to the uses of life, its embellishments were by no means neglected. She was happily endowed by nature; and, under the judicious management of her aunt, made rapid though unostentatious progress in the improvement of the talents committed to her care. Without having been blessed with the advantages of a dancing-master, her step was light, and her motions free and graceful; and if her aunt had not been able to impart to her the favourite graces of the most fashionable singer of the day, neither had she thwarted the efforts of her own natural taste, in forming a style full of simplicity and feeling. In the modern languages she was perfectly skilled; and if her drawings wanted the enlivening touches of the master to give them effect; as an atonement, they displayed a perfect knowledge of the rules of perspective and the study of the bust.

All this was however mere leather and prunella to the ladies of Glenfern; and many were the cogitations and consultations that took place on the subject of Mary's mismanagement. According to their ideas, there could be but one good system of education; and that was the one that had been pursued with them, and through them transmitted to their nieces.

To attend the parish church, and remember the text; to observe who was there, and who was *not* there; and to wind up the evening with a sermon stuttered and stammered through by one of the girls, (the worst reader always piously selected, for the purpose of improving their reading,) and particularly addressed to the Laird, openly and avowedly snoring in his arm chair, though at every pause starting up with a peevish "Weel?"—this was the sum total of their religious duties. Their moral virtues were much upon the same scale; to knit stockings, scold servants, cement china, trim bonnets, lecture the

poor, and look up to Lady Maclaughlan, comprised nearly their whole code. But these were the virtues of ripened years and enlarged understandings; what their pupils might hope to arrive at, but could not presume to meddle with. *Their* merits consisted in being compelled to sew certain large portions of white work; learning to read and write in the worst manner; occasionally *wearing* a *collar*, and learning the notes on the spinnet. These acquirements, accompanied with a great deal of lecturing and fault-finding, sufficed for the first fifteen years; when the two next, passed at a provincial boarding-school, were supposed to impart every graceful accomplishment to which women could attain.

Mrs. Douglas' method of conveying instruction, it may easily be imagined, did not square with their ideas on that subject. They did nothing themselves without a bustle, and to do a thing quietly, was to them the same as not doing it at all—it could not be done, for nobody had ever

heard of it. In short, like many other worthy people, their ears were their only organs of intelligence—they believed every thing they were told; but, unless they were told, they believed nothing. They had never heard Mrs. Douglas expatiate on the importance of the trust reposed in her, or enlarge on the difficulties of female education; *ergo*, Mrs. Douglas could have no idea of the nature of the duties she had undertaken.

Their visits to Lochmarlie only served to confirm the fact. Miss Jacky deponed, that during the month she was there, she never could discover when or how it was, that Mary got her lessons; luckily the child was quick, and had contrived, poor thing! to pick up things wonderfully, nobody knew how, for it was really astonishing to see how little pains were bestowed upon her; and the worst of it was, that she seemed to do just as she liked, for nobody ever heard her reproved, and every body knew that young people never could have

enough said to them. All this differed widely from the *eclat* of their system, and could not fail of causing great disquiet to the sisters.

"I declare, I'm quite confounded at all this!" said Miss Grizzy, at the conclusion of Miss Jacky's communication. "It really appears, as if Mary, poor thing! was getting no education at all; and yet she *can* do things, too. I can't understand it; and its very odd in Mrs. Douglas to allow her to be so much neglected, for certainly Mary's constantly with herself; which, to be sure, shews that she is very much spoilt; for although our girls are as fond of us as, I am sure, any creatures can be, yet, at the same time, they are always very glad—which is quite natural—to run away from us."

"I think its high time Mary had done something fit to be seen," said Miss Nicky. "She is now sixteen past."

"Most girls of Mary's time of life, that ever *I* had any thing to do with," replied

Jacky, with a certain wave of the head, peculiar to sensible women, "had something to shew before her age. Bella had worked the globe long before she was sixteen; and Babby did her fillagree tea-caddy the first quarter she was at Miss Macgowk's," glancing with triumph from the one which hung over the mantle-piece, to the other which stood on the tea table, shrouded in a green bag.

"And, to be sure," rejoined Grizzy, "although Betsy's skreen did cost a great deal of money—that can't be denied; and her father certainly grudged it very much at the time—there's no doubt of that; yet certainly it does her the greatest credit, and it is a great satisfaction to us all to have these things to shew. I am sure nobody would ever think that ass was made of crape, and how naturally it seems to be eating the beautiful chenille thistle! I declare, I think the ass is as like an ass as any thing can be!"

"And as to Mary's drawing," continued

the narrator of her deficiencies, "there is not one of them fit for framing; mere scratches with a chalk pencil—what any child might do."

"And to think," said Nicky, with indignation, "how little Mrs. Douglas seemed to think of the handsome coloured views the girls did at Miss Macgowk's."

"All our girls have the greatest genius for drawing," observed Grizzy; "there can be no doubt of that; but its a thousand pities, I'm sure, that none of them seem to like it. To be sure, they say—what I daresay is very true—that they can't get such good paper as they got at Miss Macgowk's; but they have shewed that they *can* do, for their drawings are quite astonishing. Somebody lately took them to be Mr. Touchup's own doing; and I'm sure there could'nt be a greater compliment than that! I represented all that to Mrs. Douglas, and urged her very strongly to give Mary the benefit of, at least, a quarter of Miss Macgowk's, were it only for the

sake of her carriage; or, at least, to make her wear our collar."

This was the tenderest of all themes, and bursts of sorrowful exclamations ensued. The collar had long been a galling yoke upon their minds; its iron had entered into their very souls; for it was a collar presented to the family of Glenfern, by the wisest, virtuousest, best of women, and of grandmothers, the good Lady Girnachgowl; and had been worn in regular rotation by every female of the family, till now, that Mrs. Douglas positively refused to subject Mary's pliant form to its thraldom. Even the Laird, albeit no connoisseur in any shapes, save those of his kine, was of opinion, that since the thing was in the house, it was a pity it should be lost. Not Venus' girdle even was supposed to confer greater charms than the Girnachgowl collar.

"It's really most distressing!" said Miss Grizzy, to her friend Lady Maclaughlan. "Mary's back won't be worth a farthing;

and we have always been quite famous for our backs."

"Humph!—that's the reason people are always so glad to see them, child."

With regard to Mary's looks, opinions were not so decided. Mrs. Douglas thought her, what she was, an elegant interesting looking girl. The Laird, as he peered at her over his spectacles, pronounced her to be but a shilpit thing, though weel aneugh, considering the neer-do-weels that were aught her. Miss Jacky opined, that she would have been quite a different creature, had she been brought up like any other girl. Miss Grizzy did not know what to think; she certainly was pretty—nobody could dispute that. At the same time, many people would prefer Bella's looks; and Babby was certainly uncommonly comely. Miss Nicky thought it was no wonder she looked pale sometimes. She never supped her broth in a wise-like way at dinner; and it was a shame to hear of a girl of Mary's age being set up with tea to her break-

fast, and wearing white petticoats in winter—and such roads, too!

Lady Maclaughlan pronounced, (and that was next to a special revelation) that the girl would be handsome when she was forty, not a day sooner; and she would be clever, for her mother was a fool; and foolish mothers had always wise children, and *vice versa*, "and your mother was a very clever woman, girls—humph!"

Thus passed the early years of the almost forgotten twin; blest in the warm affection and mild authority of her more than mother. Sometimes Mrs. Douglas half-formed the wish, that her beloved pupil should mix in society, and become known to the world; but when she reflected on the dangers of that world, and on the little solid happiness its pleasures afford, she repressed the wish, and only prayed she might be allowed to rest secure in the simple pleasures she then enjoyed. "Happiness is not a plant of this earth," said she to herself with a sigh; "but God

gives peace and tranquillity to the virtuous in all situations, and under every trial. Let me then strive to make Mary virtuous, and leave the rest to Him who alone knoweth what is good for us!"

CHAPTER II.

"Th' immortal line in sure succession reigns,
The fortune of the family remains,
And grandsires' grandsons the long list contains."
DRYDEN'S *Virgil.*

—————"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."
Tempest.

BUT Mary's back, and Mary's complexion, now ceased to be the first objects of interest at Glenfern; for, to the inexpressible delight and amazement of the sisters, Mrs. Douglas, after due warning, became the mother of a son. How this event had been brought about without the interven-

tion of Lady Maclaughlan, was past the powers of Miss Grizzy's comprehension. To the last moment, they had been sceptical; for Lady Maclaughlan had shook her head, and humphed whenever the subject was mentioned. For several months they had therefore vibrated between their own sanguine hopes, and their oracle's disheartening doubts; and, even when the truth was manifest, a sort of vague tremor took possession of their mind as to what Lady Maclaughlan would think of it.

"I declare I don't very well know how to announce this happy event to Lady Maclaughlan," said Miss Grizzy, as she sat in a ruminating posture, with her pen in her hand; "it will give her the greatest pleasure, I know that; she has such a regard for our family, she would go any lengths for us. At the same time, every body must be sensible it is a delicate matter to tell a person of Lady Maclaughlan's skill they have been mistaken. I'm sure I don't know how she may take it; and

yet she can't suppose it will make any difference in our sentiments for her. She must be sensible we have all the greatest respect for her opinion."

"The wisest people are sometimes mistaken," observed Miss Jacky.

"I'm sure, Jacky, that's very true," said Grizzy, brightening up at the brilliancy of this remark.

"And it's better she should have been mistaken than Mrs. Douglas," followed up Miss Nicky.

"I declare, Nicky, you are perfectly right; and I shall just say so at once to Lady Maclaughlan."

The epistle was forthwith commenced by the enlightened Grizelda. Miss Joan applied herself to the study of "The whole Duty of Man," which she was determined to make herself mistress of for the benefit of her grand-nephew; and Miss Nicholas fell to reckoning all who could, would, or should, be at the christening, that she might calculate upon the quantity of *dreaming-*

bread that would be required. The younger ladies were busily engaged in divers and sundry disputes regarding the right to succession to a once-white lutestring negligée of their mother's, which three of them had laid their accounts with figuring in at the approaching celebration. The old gentleman was the only one in the family who took the least of the general happiness. He had got into a habit of being fretted about every thing that happened, and he could not entirely divest himself of it even upon this occasion. His parsimonious turns, too, had considerably increased; and his only criterion of judging of any thing was according to what it would bring.

"Sorra tak me, if ane wad nae think, to hear ye, this was the first bairn that e'er was born! What's a' the fraize aboot, ye gowks? (to his daughters)—a whingin get! that'll tak mair oot o' fowk's pockets than e'er it'll pit into them! Mony a guid profitable beast's been brought into the warld, and ne'er a word in in'ts heed."

All went on smoothly. Lady Maclaughlan testified no resentment. Miss Jacky had "*The Whole Duty of Man*" at her finger-ends; and Miss Nicky was not more severe than could have been expected, considering, as she did, how the servants at Lochmarlie must be living at hack and manger. It had been decided at Glenfern, that the infant heir to its consequence could not, with propriety, be christened any where but at the seat of his forefathers. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas had good-humouredly yielded the point; and, as soon as she was able for the change, the whole family took up their residence for a season under the paternal roof.

Blissful visions floated around the pillows of the happy spinsters the night preceding the christening, which were duly detailed at the breakfast-table the following morning.

"I declare I don't know what to think of my dream," began Miss Grizzy: "I dreamt, that Lady Maclaughlan was upon

her knees to your brother, to get you to take an emetic; and, just as she had mixed it up so nicely in some of our black currant jelly, little Norman snatched it out of your hand, and ran away with it."

"You're aneugh to turn ony body's stamick wi' your nonsense," returned the Laird gruffly.

"And I," said Miss Jacky, "thought I saw you standing in your shirt, brother, as straight as a rash, and good Lady Girnachgowl buckling her collar upon you with her own hands."

"I wish ye wad na deive me wi' your havers!" still more indignantly, and turning his shoulder to the fair dreamer, as he continued to con over the newspaper.

"And I," cried Miss Nicky, eager to get her mystic tale disclosed, "I thought, brother, I saw you take and throw all the good dreaming-bread into the ash-hole."

"By my troth, an' ye deserve to be thrown after't!" exclaimed the exasperated Laird, as he quitted the room in high wrath, mut-

tering to himself, "Hard case—canna get peace—eat my vittals—fules—tawpies—clavers!" &c. &c.

"I declare I can't conceive why Glenfern should be so ill pleased at our dreams," said Miss Grizzy. "Every body knows dreams are always contrary; and, even were it otherwise, I'm sure I should think no shame to take an emetic, especially when Lady Maclaughlan was at the trouble of mixing it up so nicely."

"And we have all worn good Lady Girnachgowl's collar before now," said Miss Jacky.

"I think I had the worst of it, that had all my good dreaming-bread destroyed," added Miss Nicky.

"Nothing could be more natural than your dreams," said Mrs. Douglas, "considering how all these subjects have engrossed you for some time past. You, aunt Grizzy, may remember how desirous you were of administering one of Lady Maclaughlan's powders to my little boy yester-

day; and you, aunt Jacky, made a point of trying Lady Girnachgowl's collar upon Mary, to convince her how pleasant it was; while you, aunt Nicky, had experienced a great alarm in supposing your cake had been burned in the oven. And these being the most vivid impressions you had received during the day, it was perfectly natural that they should have retained their influence during a portion of the night."

The interpretations were received with high disdain. One and all declared they never dreamed of any thing that *had* occurred; and therefore the visions of the night portended some extraordinary good fortune to the family in general, and to little Norman in particular.

"The best fortune I can wish for him, and all of us for this day, is, that he should remain quiet during the ceremony," said his mother, who was not so elated as Lady Macbeth at the predictions of the sisters.

The christening party mustered strong; and the rites of baptism were duly perform-

ed by the Rev. Duncan M'Drone. The little Christian had been kissed by every lady in company, and pronounced by the matrons to be " a dainty little *doug !*" and by the misses to be " the sweetest lamb they had ever seen !" The cake and wine was in its progress round the company; when, upon its being tendered to the old gentleman, who was sitting silent in his arm-chair, he abruptly exclaimed, in a most discordant voice, " Hey! what's a' this wastery for ?"—and, ere an answer could be returned, his jaw dropped, his eyes fixed, and the Laird of Glenfern ceased to breathe!

CHAPTER III.

"They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is, that we make trifles of terrors; ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear."

All's Well that Ends Well.

All attempts to reanimate the lifeless form proved unavailing; and the horror and consternation that reigned in the castle of Glenfern may be imagined, but cannot be described. There is perhaps no feeling of our nature so vague, so complicated, so mysterious, as that with which we look

upon the cold remains of our fellow-mortals. The dignity with which death invests even the meanest of his victims, inspires us with an awe no living thing can create. The monarch on his throne is less awful than the beggar in his shroud. The marble features—the powerless hand—the stiffened limbs—oh! who can contemplate these with feelings that can be defined? These are the mockery of all our hopes and fears, our fondest love, our fellest hate. Can it be, that we now shrink with horror from the touch of that hand, which but yesterday was fondly clasped in our own? Is that tongue, whose accents even now dwell in our ear, for ever chained in the silence of death? These black and heavy eye-lids, are they for ever to seal up in darkness the eyes whose glance no earthly power could restrain? And the spirit which animated the clay, where is it now? Is it wrapt in bliss, or dissolved in woe? Does it witness our grief, and share our

sorrows? or is the mysterious tye that linked it with mortality for ever broken? and the remembrance of earthly scenes, are they indeed to the enfranchised spirit as the morning dream, or the dew upon the early flower? Reflections such as these naturally arise in every breast. Their influence is felt, though their import cannot always be expressed. The principle is in all the same, however it may differ in its operations.

In the family assembled round the lifeless form, that had so long been the centre of their domestic circle, grief shewed itself under various forms. The calm and manly sorrow of the son; the saint-like feelings of his wife; the youthful agitation of Mary; the weak superstitious wailings of the sisters; and the loud uncontrolled lamentations of the daughters; all betokened an intensity of suffering that arose from the same source, varied according to the different channels in which it flowed. Even

the stern Lady Maclaughlan was subdued to something of kindred feeling; and though no tears dropped from her eyes, she sat by her friends, and sought, in her own way, to soften their affliction.

The assembled guests, who had not yet been able to take their departure, remained in the drawing-room in a sort of restless solemnity peculiar to seasons of collateral affliction, where all seek to heighten the effect upon others, and shift the lesson from themselves. Various were the surmises and speculations as to the cause of the awful transition that had just taken place.

"Glenfern was nae like a man that wad hae gaen aff in this gate," said one.

"I dinna ken," said another; "I've notic'd a chainge on Glenfern for a gay while noo."

"I agree wi' you, Sir," said a third: "In my mind, Glenfern's been droopin' very sair ever since the last tryst."

"At Glenfern's time o' life, its no surprisin'," remarked a fourth; who felt perfectly secure of being fifteen years his junior.

"Glenfern was na that auld neither," retorted a fifth; whose conscience smote him with being several years his senior.

"But he had a deal o' vexation frae his faemilly," said an elderly bachelor.

"Ye offen see a hale stoot man, like our puir freend, gang like the snuff o' a cannel," coughed up a pthisicky gentleman.

"He was ay a tume boss-looking man, ever since I mind him," wheezed out a swoln asthmatic figure.

"An' he took nae care o' himsel," said the Laird of Pettlechass. "His diet was nae what it should hae been at his time o' life. An' he was oot an' in, up an' doon, in a' wathers, wat an' dry."

"Glenfern's doings had naething to du wi' his death," said an ancient gentlewoman with solemnity. "They maun ken

little wha ne'er heard the bod-word of the familly." And she repeated in Gaelic words to the following effect :

" When Lochdow shall turn to a lin,*
In Glenfern ye'll hear the din ;
When frae Benenck they shool the sna',
O'er Glenfern the leaves will fa' ;
When foreign geer grows on Benenck tap,
Then the fir tree will be Glenfern's hap."

" An' noo, ma'am, will ye be sae gude as point oot the meanin' o' this freet," said an incredulous looking member of the company ; " for when I passed Lochdow this mornin', I neither saw nor heard o' a lin ; an' frae this window we can aw see Benenck wi' his white night-cap on ; an' he wad hae little to do that wad try to shool it aff."

" It's neither o' the still water, nor the stay brae, that the word was spoke," re-

* Cataract.

plied the dame, with a disdainful frown; "they tak nae part in our doings: but kent ye nae that Lochdow himsell had tined his sight in a cataract; an' is nae there dule an' din aneuch in Glenfern the day? An' kent ye nae that Benenck had his auld white pow shaven, an' that he's gettin' a jeezy frae Edinburgh?—an' I'se warran he'll be in his braw wig the very day that Glenfern'll be laid in his deal coffin."

The company admitted the application was too close to be resisted; but the same sceptic (who, by the bye, was only a low country merchant, elevated, by purchase, to the dignity of a Highland laird,) was seen to shrug his shoulders, and heard to make some sneering remarks on the days of second sights, and such superstitious nonsense, being past. This was instantly laid hold of; and, amongst many others of the same sort, the truth of the following story was attested by one of the party.

as having actually occurred in his family within his own remembrance.

"As Duncan M'Crae was one evening descending Benvoilloich, he perceived a funeral procession in the vale beneath. He was greatly surprised, not having heard of any death in the country; and this appeared to be the burial of some person of consequence, from the number of the attendants. He made all the haste he could to get down; and, as he drew near, he counted all the lairds of the country except my father, Sir Murdoch. He was astonished at this, till he recollected that he was away to the low country to his cousin's marriage; but he felt curious to know who it was, though some unaccountable feeling prevented him from mixing with the followers. He therefore kept on the ridge of the hill, right over their heads, and near enough to hear them speak; but although he saw them move their lips, no sound reached his ear. He

kept along with the procession in this way, till it reached the Castle Dochart burying-ground, and there it stopped. The evening was close and warm, and a thick mist had gathered in the glen, while the tops of the hills shone like gold. Not a breath of air was stirring; but the trees that grew round the burying-ground, waved and soughed, and some withered leaves were swirled round and round, as if by the wind. The company stood a while to rest; and then they proceeded to open the iron gates of the burying-ground; but the lock was rusted, and would not open. Then they began to pull down part of the wall; and Duncan thought how angry his master would be at this, and he raised his voice, and shouted, and hallooed to them, but to no purpose. Nobody seemed to hear him. At last the wall was taken down, and the coffin was lifted over, and just then the sun broke out, and glinted on a new made grave; and as they were laying the coffin in it, it gave way,

and disclosed Sir Murdoch himself in his dead clothes; and then the mist grew so thick, Duncan could see no more, and how to get home he knew not; but when he entered his own door, he was bathed in sweat, and white as any corpse; and all that he could say was, that he had seen Castle Dochart's burying.

"The following day," continued the narrator, "he was more composed, and gave the account you have now heard; and three days after came the intelligence of my father's death. He had dropt down in a fit that very evening, when entertaining a large company in honour of his cousin's marriage; and that day week his funeral passed through Glenvalloch exactly as described by Duncan M'Crae, with all the particulars: The gates of the burying ground could not be opened; part of the wall was taken down to admit the coffin, which received some injury, and gave way as they were placing it in the grave."

Even the low-country infidel was silenced by the solemnity of this story; and soon after the company dispersed, every one panting to be the first to circulate the intelligence of Glenfern's death.

But soon!—Oh, how soon!—"dies in human hearts the thought of death!" Even the paltry detail which death creates, serves to detach our minds from the cause itself. So it was with the family of Glenfern. Their light did not "shine inward;" and after the first burst of sorrow, their ideas fastened with avidity on all the paraphernalia of affliction. Mr. Douglas, indeed, found much to do, and to direct to be done. The elder ladies began to calculate how many yards of broad hemming would be required, and to form a muster-roll of the company; with this improvement, that it was to be ten times as numerous as the one that had assembled at the christening: while the young ones busied their imaginations as to the effect of new mournings—a luxury to them hi-

therto unknown. Mrs. Douglas and Mary were differently affected. Religion and reflection had taught the former, the enviable lesson of possessing her soul in patience under every trial; and while she inwardly mourned the fate of the poor old man who had been thus suddenly snatched from the only world that ever had engaged his thoughts, her outward aspect was calm and serene. The impression made upon Mary's feelings was of a more powerful nature. She had witnessed suffering, and watched by sick-beds; but death, and death in so terrific a form, was new to her. She had been standing by her grandfather's chair—her head was bent to his—her hand rested upon his, when, by a momentary convulsion, she beheld the last dread change—the living man transformed into the lifeless corpse. The countenance but now fraught with life and human thoughts, in the twinkling of an eye, was covered with the shades of death! It was in vain that Mary

prayed, and reasoned, and strove against the feelings that had been thus powerfully excited. One object alone possessed her imagination—the image of her grandfather dying—dead; his grim features—his ghastly visage—his convulsive grasp—were ever present, by day and by night. Her nervous system had received a shock too powerful for all the strength of her understanding to contend with. Mrs. Douglas sought, by every means, to sooth her feelings, and divert her attention; and flattered herself that a short time would allay the perturbation of her youthful emotions.

Five hundred persons, horse and foot, high and low, male and female, graced the obsequies of the Laird of Glenfern. Benenck was there in his new wig, and the autumnal leaves dropped on the coffin as it was borne slowly along the vale!

CHAPTER IV

"It is no diminution, but a recommendation of human nature, that, in some instances, passion gets the better of reason, and all that we can think, is impotent against half what we feel."

Spectator.

"Life is a mingled yarn;" few of its afflictions but are accompanied with some alleviation—none of its blessings that do not bring some alloy. Like most other events, that long have formed the object of yearning and almost hopeless wishes, and on which have been built the fairest structure of human felicity, the arrival of the young heir of Glenfern produced a less extraordi-

nary degree of happiness than had been anticipated. The melancholy event which had marked the first ceremonial of his life, had cast its gloom alike on all nearly connected with him; and when time had dispelled the clouds of recent mourning, and restored the mourners to their habitual train of thought and action, somewhat of the novelty, which had given him such lively interest in the hearts of the sisters, had subsided. The distressing conviction, too, more and more forced itself upon them, that their advice and assistance were likely to be wholly overlooked in the nurture of the infant mind, and management of the thriving frame of their little nephew. Their active energies therefore, driven back to the accustomed channels, after many murmurs and severe struggles, again revolved in the same sphere as before. True they sighed and mourned for a time, but soon found occupation congenial to their nature in the little departments of life;

dressing crape; reviving black silk; converting narrow hems into broad hems; and, in short, who so busy, who so important, as the ladies of Glenfern? As Madame de Stael, or de Something says, "they fulfilled their destinies." Their walk lay amongst threads and pickles; their sphere extended from the garret to the pantry; and often, as they sought to diverge from it, their instinct always led them to return to it, as the tract in which they were destined to move. There are creatures of the same sort in the male part of the creation, but it is foreign to my purpose to describe them at present. Neither are the trifling and insignificant of either sex to be treated with contempt, or looked upon as useless by those whom God has gifted with higher powers. In the arrangements of an all-wise Providence, there is nothing created in vain. Every link of the vast chain that embraces creation helps to hold together the various relations of life; and all is

beautiful gradation, from the human vegetable to the glorious archangel.

If patient hope, if unexulting joy, and chastened anticipation, sanctifying a mother's love, could have secured her happiness, Mrs. Douglas would have found, in the smiles of her infant, all the comfort her virtue deserved. But she still had to drink of that cup of sweet and bitter, which must bathe the lips of all who breathe the breath of life.

While the instinct of a parent's love warmed her heart, as she pressed her infant to her bosom, the sadness of affectionate and rational solicitude stifled every sentiment of pleasure, as she gazed on the altered and drooping form of her adopted daughter—of the child who had already repaid the cares that had been lavished on her, and in whom she descried the promise of a plenteous harvest from the good seed she had sown. Though Mary had been healthy in childhood, her constitution was

naturally delicate, and she had latterly outgrown her strength. The shock she had sustained by her grandfather's death, thus operating on a weakened frame, had produced an effect apparently most alarming; and the efforts she made to exert herself, only served to exhaust her. She felt all the watchful solicitude, the tender anxieties of her aunt, and bitterly reproached herself with not better repaying these exertions for her happiness. A thousand times she tried to analyse and extirpate the saddening impression that weighed upon her heart.

"It is not sorrow," reasoned she with herself, "that thus oppresses me; for though I reverenced my grandfather, yet the loss of his society has scarcely been felt by me. It cannot be fear—the fear of death; for my soul is not so abject as to confine its desires to this sublunary scene. What then is this mysterious dread that has taken possession of me? Why do I

suffer my mind to suggest to me images of horror, instead of visions of bliss? Why can I not, as formerly, picture to myself the beauty and the brightness of a soul casting off mortality? Why must the convulsed grasp, the stifled groan, the glaring eye, for ever come betwixt heaven and me?"

Alas! Mary was unskilled to answer. Her's was the season for feeling, not for reasoning. She knew not that her's was the struggle of imagination striving to maintain its ascendancy over reality. She had heard and read, and thought, and talked of death; but it was of death in its fairest form—in its softest transition: and the veil had been abruptly torn from her eyes; the gloomy pass had suddenly disclosed itself before her, not strewed with flowers, but shrouded in horrors. Like all persons of sensibility, Mary had a disposition to view every thing in a *beau-idéal:* whether that is a boon most fraught with

good or ill, it were difficult to ascertain. While the delusion lasts, it is productive of pleasure to its possessor; but, oh! the thousand aches that heart is destined to endure, which clings to the stability, and relies on the permanency of earthly happiness! But the youthful heart must ever remain a stranger to this saddening truth. Experience only can convince us, that happiness is not a plant of this world; and that, though many an eye hath beheld its blossoms, no mortal hand hath ever gathered its fruits. This, then, was Mary's first lesson in what is called the knowledge of life, as opposed to the *beau-idéal* of a young and ardent imagination, in love with life, and luxuriating in its own happiness. And, upon such a mind, it could not fail of producing a powerful impression.

The anguish Mrs. Douglas experienced, as she witnessed the changing colour, lifeless step, and forced smile of her darling *eléve*, was not mitigated by the good sense

or sympathy of those around her. While Mary had prospered under her management, in the consciousness that she was fulfilling her duty to the best of her abilities, she could listen, with placid cheerfulness, to the broken hints of disapprobation, or forced good wishes for the success of her new-fangled schemes, that were levelled at her by the sisters. But now, when her cares seemed defeated, it was an additional thorn in her heart to have to endure the common-place wisdom, and self-gratulations of the almost exulting aunts; not that they had the slightest intention of wounding the feelings of their niece, whom they really loved, but the temptation was irresistible of proving, that they had been in the right, and she in the wrong, especially as no such acknowledgment had yet been extorted from her.

"It is nonsense to ascribe Mary's dwining to her grandfather's death," said Miss Jacky. "We were all nearer to him in

propinquity than she was, and none of our healths have suffered."

"And there's his own daughters," added Miss Grizzy," who, of course, must have felt a great deal more than any body else—there can be no doubt of that—Such sensible creatures as them must feel a great deal; but yet you see how they have got up their spirits—I'm sure it's wonderful!"

"It shews their sense, and the effects of education," said Miss Jacky.

"Girls that sup their porridge, will always cut a good figure," quoth Nicky.

"With their fine feelings, I'm sure, we have all reason to be thankful that they have been blest with such hearty stomachs," observed Miss Grizzy; "if they had been delicate, like poor Mary's, I'm sure, I declare, I don't know what we would have done; for certainly they were all most dreadfully affected at their excellent father's death; which was quite natural, poor things! I'm sure there's no pacifying poor Babby, and

even yet, neither Bella nor Betsey can bear to be left alone in a dark room. Tibby has to sleep with them still every night; and a lighted candle too—which is much to their credit—and yet I'm sure its not with reading. I'm certain—indeed, I think there's no doubt of it—that reading does young people much harm. It puts things into their heads that never would have been there, but for books. I declare, I think, reading's a very dangerous thing. I'm certain all Mary's bad health is entirely owing to reading. You know, we always thought she read a great deal too much for her good."

"Much depends upon the choice of books," said Jacky, with an air of the most profound wisdom. "Fordyce's Sermons, and the History of Scotland, are two of the very few books *I* would put into the hands of a young woman. Our girls have read little else,"—casting a look at Mrs. Douglas, who was calmly pursuing her

work in the midst of this shower of darts all levelled at her."

"To be sure," returned Grizzy, "it is a thousand pities that Mary has been allowed to go on so long; not, I'm sure, that any of us mean to reflect upon you, my dear Mrs. Douglas; for of course it was all owing to your ignorance and inexperience; and that, you know, you could not help; for it was not your fault; nobody can blame you. I'm certain you would have done what is right, if you had only known better; but, of course, we must all know much better than you; because, you know, we are all a great deal older, and especially Lady Maclaughlan, who has the greatest experience in the diseases of old men especially, and infants. Indeed it has been the study of her life almost; for, you know, poor Sir Sampson is never well; and, I dare say, if Mary had taken some of her nice worm-lozenges, which certainly cured Duncan M'Nab's wife's daughter's little girl of the

jaundice, and used that valuable growing embrocation, which we are all sensible made Babby a great deal fatter, I dare say there would have been nothing the matter with her to-day."

"Mary has been too much accustomed to spend both her time and money amongst idle vagrants," said Nicky.

"Economy of both," subjoined Jacky, with an air of humility, "I confess *I* have ever been accustomed to consider as virtues. These handsome respectable new bonnets," looking *from* Mrs. Douglas, "that our girls got just before their poor father's death, were entirely the fruits of their own savings."

"And I declare," said Grizzy, who did not excel in inuendos; "I declare, for my part—although at the same time, my dear niece, I'm certain you are far from intending it—I really think it's very disrespectful to Sir Sampson and Lady M'Laughlan, in any body, and especially such near neighbours,

to give more in charity than they do; for, you may be sure, they give as much as they think proper, and they must be the best judges, and can afford to give what they please; for Sir Sampson could buy and sell all of us a hundred times over, if he liked. It's long since the Lochmarlie estate was called seven thousand a year; and, besides that, there's the Birkendale property, and the Glenmavis estate; and, I'm sure, I can't tell you all what; but there's no doubt he's a man of immense fortune."

Well it was known, and frequently was it discussed, the iniquity of Mary being allowed to waste her time, and squander her money amongst the poor, instead of being taught the practical virtues of making her own gowns, and of hoarding up her pocket-money for some selfish gratification.

In colloquies such as these, day after day passed on without any visible improvement taking place in her health. Only one remedy suggested itself to Mrs. Douglas,

and that was to remove her to the South of England for the winter. Milder air, and change of scene, she had no doubt would prove efficacious; and her opinion was confirmed by that of the celebrated Dr. ——, who having been summoned to the Laird of Pettlechass, had paid a visit at Glenfern *en passant.* How so desirable an event was to be accomplished, was the difficulty. By the death of his father, a variety of business, and an extent of farming had devolved upon Mr. Douglas, which obliged him to fix his residence at Glenfern, and rendered it impossible for him to be long absent from it. Mrs. Douglas had engaged in the duties of a nurse to her little boy, and to take him, or leave him, was equally out of the question.

In this dilemma, the only resource that offered, was that of sending Mary for a few months to her mother. True, it was a painful necessity; for Mrs. Douglas seldom heard from her sister-in-law, and when she

did, her letters were short and cold. She sometimes desired a "kiss to her (Mrs. Douglas') little girl," and once, in an extraordinary fit of good humour, had actually sent a locket with her hair in a letter by post, for which Mrs. Douglas had to pay something more than the value of the present. This was all that Mâry knew of her mother, and the rest of her family were still greater strangers to her. Her father remained in a distant station in India, and was seldom heard of. Her brother was gone to sea; and though she had written repeatedly to her sister, her letters remained unnoticed. Under these circumstances, there was something revolting in the idea of obtruding Mary upon the notice of her relations, and trusting to their kindness even for a few months; yet her health, perhaps her life, was at stake, and Mrs. Douglas felt she had scarcely a right to hesitate.

"Mary has perhaps been too long an

alien from her own family," said she to herself; "this will be a means of her becoming acquainted with them, and of introducing her to that sphere in which she is probably destined to walk. Under her uncle's roof she will surely be safe, and in the society of her mother and sister she cannot be unhappy. New scenes will give a stimulus to her mind; the necessity of exertion will brace the languid faculties of her soul, and a few short months, I trust, will restore her to me such, and even superior to what she was. Why then should I hesitate to do what my conscience tells me ought to be done? Alas! it is because I selfishly shrink from the pain of separation, and am unwilling to relinquish, even for a season, one of the many blessings heaven has bestowed upon me." And Mrs. Douglas, noble and disinterested as ever, rose superior to the weakness that she felt was besetting her. Mary listened to her communication with a throbbing heart, and

eyes suffused with tears; to part from her aunt was agony; but to behold her mother—she to whom she owed her existence—to embrace a sister too—and one for whom she felt all those mysterious yearnings which twins are said to entertain towards each other.—O, there was rapture in the thought, and Mary's buoyant heart fluctuated between the extremes of anguish and delight.

The venerable sisters received the intelligence with much surprise: they did not know very well what to say about it; there was much to be said both for and against it. Lady Maclaughlan had a high opinion of English air; but then they had heard the morals of the people were not so good, and there were a great many dissipated young men in England; though, to be sure, there was no denying but the mineral waters were excellent; and, in short, it ended in Miss Grizzy's sitting down to concoct an epistle to Lady Maclaughlan;

in Miss Jacky's beginning to draw up a code of instructions, for a young woman upon her entrance into life; and Miss Nicky hoping, that if Mary did go, she would take care not to bring back any extravagant English notions with her. The younger set debated amongst themselves how many of them would be invited to accompany Mary to England, and from thence fell to disputing the possession of a brown hair trunk, with a flourished D, in brass letters, on the top.

Mrs. Douglas, with repressed feelings, set about offering the sacrifice she had planned, and in a letter to Lady Juliana, descriptive of her daughter's situation, she sought to excite her tenderness without creating an alarm. How far she succeeded, will be seen hereafter. In the meantime, we must take a retrospective glance at the last seventeen years of her Ladyship's life.

CHAPTER V.

Her " only labour was to still the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe."
Castle of Indolence.

YEARS had rolled on, amidst heartless pleasures and joyless amusements, but Lady Juliana was made neither the wiser nor the better, by added years and increased experience. Time had in vain turned his glass before eyes still dazzled with the gaudy allurements of the world, for she took " no note of time," but as the thing that was to take her to the Opera and the Park, and that sometimes hurried her ex-

cessively, and sometimes bored her to death. At length she was compelled to abandon her chace after happiness, in the only sphere where she believed it was to be found. Lord Courtland's declining health unfitted him for the dissipation of a London life; and, by the advice of his physician, he resolved upon retiring to a country seat, which he possessed in the vicinity of Bath. Lady Juliana was in despair at the thoughts of this sudden wrench from what she termed life; but she had no resource; for though her good-natured husband gave her the whole of General Cameron's allowance, that scarcely served to keep her in clothes; and though her brother was perfectly willing, that she and her children should occupy apartments in his house, yet he would have been equally acquiescent, had she proposed to remove from it. Lady Juliana had a sort of instinctive knowledge of this, which prevented her from breaking out into open remonstrance. She there-

fore contented herself with being more than usually peevish and irascible to her servants and children; and talking to her friends of the prodigious sacrifice she was about to make for her brother and his family, as if it had been the cutting off of a hand, or the plucking out of an eye. To have heard her, any one unaccustomed to the hyperbole of fashionable language, would have deemed Botany Bay the nearest possible point of destination. Parting from her fashionable acquaintances, was tearing herself from all she loved—quitting London was bidding adieu to the world. Of course there could be no society where she was going, but still she would do her duty—she would not desert dear Frederick, and his poor children! In short, no martyr was ever led to the stake, with half the notions of heroism and self devotion, as those with which Lady Juliana stepped into the barouche that was to conduct her to Beech Park. In the society of piping

bulfinches, pink canaries, grey parrots, gold fish, green squirrels, Italian greyhounds, and French poodles, she sought a refuge from despair. But even these varied charms, after a while, failed to please: The bulfinches grew hoarse—the canaries turned brown—the parrots became stupid—the gold fish would not eat—the squirrels were cross—the dogs fought; even a shell grotto that was constructing fell down; and, by the time the aviary and conservatory were filled, they had lost their interest. The children were the next subjects for her Ladyship's *ennui* to discharge itself upon. Lord Courtland had a son, some years older, and a daughter nearly of the same age as her own. It suddenly occurred to her, that they must be educated, and that she would educate the girls herself. As the first step, she engaged two governesses; French and Italian;—modern treatises on the subject of education were ordered from London—looked at, admired and arranged

on gilded shelves, and sofa tables; and could their contents have exhaled with the odours of their Russia leather bindings, Lady Juliana's dressing-room would have been, what Sir Joshua Reynolds says every seminary of learning *is*, "an atmosphere of floating knowledge." But amidst this splendid display of human lore, THE BOOK found no place. She *had* heard of the Bible, however, and even knew it was a book appointed to be read in churches, and given to poor people, along with Rumford soup, and flannel shirts; but as the rule of life—as the book that alone could make wise unto salvation, this Christian parent was ignorant as the Hottentot or Hindoo.

Three days beheld the rise, progress, and decline of Lady Juliana's whole system of education; and it would have been well for the children, had the trust been delegated to those better qualified to discharge it. But neither of the preceptresses were better skilled in the only true knowledge.

Signora Cicianai was a bigotted Catholic, whose faith hung upon her beads, and Madame Grignon was an *esprit forte*, who had no faith in any thing but *le plaisir*. But the Signora's singing was heavenly, and Madame's dancing was divine, and what lacked there more?

So passed the first years of beings training for immortality. The children insensibly ceased to be children, and Lady Juliana would have beheld the increasing height and beauty of her daughter, with extreme disapprobation, had not that beauty, by awakening her ambition, also excited her affection, if the term affection could be applied to that heterogeneous mass of feelings and propensities that "shape had none distinguishable." Lady Juliana had fallen into an error, very common with wiser heads than hers—that of mistaking the *effect* for the *cause*. She looked no farther than to her union with Henry Douglas, for the foundation of all her un-

happiness—it never once occurred to her, that her marriage was only the *consequence* of something previously wrong; she saw not the headstrong passions that had impelled her to please herself—no matter at what price. She thought not of the want of principle—she blushed not at the want of delicacy, that had led her to deceive a parent, and elope with a man to whose character she was a total stranger. She therefore considered herself as having fallen a victim to love; and could she only save her daughter from a similar error, she might yet by her means retrieve her fallen fortune. To implant principles of religion and virtue in her mind, was not within the compass of her own; but she could scoff at every pure and generous affection—she could ridicule every disinterested attachment—and she could expatiate on the never fading joys that attend on wealth and titles, jewels and equipages—and all this she did in the belief that she was acting the

part of a most wise and tender parent! The seed, thus carefully sown, promised to bring forth an abundant harvest. At eighteen, Adelaide Douglas was as heartless and ambitious as she was beautiful and accomplished—but the surface was covered with flowers, and who would have thought of analysing the soil?

It sometimes happens, that the very means used, with success, in the formation of one character, produce a totally opposite effect upon another. The mind of Lady Emily Lindore had undergone exactly the same process in its formation as that of her cousin; yet in all things they differed. Whether it were the independence of high birth, or the pride of a mind conscious of its own powers, she had hitherto resisted the sophistry of her governesses, and the solecisms of her aunt. But her notions of right and wrong were too crude to influence the general tenor of her life, or operate as restraints upon a naturally high

spirit, and impetuous temper. Not all the united efforts of her preceptresses had been able to form a manner for their pupil ; nor could their authority restrain her from saying what she thought, and doing what she pleased ; and, in spite of both precept and example, Lady Emily remained, as insupportably natural and sincere, as she was beautiful and *piquante*. At six years old, she had declared her intention of marrying her cousin, Edward Douglas ; and, at eighteen, her words were little less equivocal. Lord Courtland, who never disturbed himself about any thing, was rather diverted with this juvenile attachment ; and Lady Juliana, who cared little for her son, and still less for her niece, only wondered how people could be such fools as to think of marrying for love, after she had told them how miserable it would make them.

CHAPTER VI.

"Unthought of frailties cheat us in the wise;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies."

POPE.

SUCH were the female members of the family to whom Mary was about to be introduced. In her mother's heart she had no place, for of her absent husband and neglected daughter she seldom thought; and their letters were scarcely read, and rarely answered. Even good Miss Grizzy's elaborate epistle, in which were curiously entwined the death of her brother, and the birth and christening of her grand-nephew,

in a truly Gordian manner, remained disentangled. Had her Ladyship only read to the middle of the seventh page, she would have learned the indisposition of her daughter, with the various opinions thereupon; but poor Miss Grizzy's labours were vain, for her letter remains a dead letter to this day. Mrs. Douglas was therefore the first to convey the unwelcome intelligence, and to suggest to the mind of the mother, that her alienated daughter still retained some claims upon her care and affection; and, although this was done with all the tenderness and delicacy of a gentle and enlig - tened mind, it called forth the most bitter indignation from Lady Juliana.

She almost raved at what she termed the base ingratitude and hypocrisy of her sister-in-law. After the sacrifice she had made in giving up her child to her when she had none of her own, it was a pretty return to send her back only to die. But she saw through it. She did not believe a

word of the girl's illness: that was all a trick to get rid of her. Now they had a child of their own, they had no use for hers; but she was not to be made a fool of in such a way, and by such people, &c. &c.

"If Mrs. Douglas is so vile a woman," said the provoking Lady Emily, "the sooner my cousin is taken from her the better."

"You don't understand these things, Emily," returned her aunt impatiently.

"What things?"

"The trouble and annoyance it will occasion me to take charge of the girl at this time."

"Why at this time more than at any other?"

"Absurd, my dear! how can you ask so foolish a question? Don't you know that you and Adelaide are both to bring out this winter, and how can I possibly do you justice, with a dying girl upon my hands?"

"I thought you suspected it was all a trick," continued the persecuting Lady Emily.

"So I do; I havn't the least doubt of it. The whole story is the most improbable stuff I ever heard."

"Then you will have less trouble than you expect."

"But I hate to be made a dupe of, and imposed upon by low cunning. If Mrs. Douglas had told me candidly she wished me to take the girl, I would have thought nothing of it; but I can't bear to be treated like a fool."

"I don't see any thing at all unbecoming in Mrs. Douglas' treatment."

"Then, what can I do with a girl who has been educated in Scotland? She must be vulgar—all Scotchwomen are so. They have red hands and rough voices; they yawn, and blow their noses, and talk, and laugh loud, and do a thousand shocking things. Then, to hear the Scotch brogue

—oh, heavens! I should expire every time she opened her mouth!"

"Perhaps my sister may not speak so *very* broad," kindly suggested Adelaide in her sweetest accents.

"You are very good, my love, to think so; but nobody can live in that odious country without being infected with its *patois*. I really thought I should have caught it myself; and Mr. Douglas (no longer Henry) became quite gross in his language, after living amongst his relations."

"This is really too bad," cried Lady Emily indignantly. "If a person speaks sense and truth, what does it signify how it is spoken? And whether your Ladyship chooses to receive your daughter here or not, I shall, at any rate, invite my cousin to my father's house." And, snatching up a pen, she instantly began a letter to Mary.

Lady Juliana was highly incensed at this freedom of her niece; but she was a little

afraid of her, and therefore, after some sharp altercation, and with infinite violence done to her feelings, she was prevailed upon to write a decently civil sort of a letter to Mrs. Douglas, consenting to receive her daughter for a *few months;* firmly resolving in her own mind to conceal her from all eyes and ears while she remained, and to return her to her Scotch relations early in the summer.

This worthy resolution formed, she became more serene, and awaited the arrival of her daughter with as much firmness as could reasonably have been expected.

CHAPTER VII.

> "And for unfelt imaginations
> They often feel a world of restless cares."
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

LITTLE weened the good ladies of Glenfern the ungracious reception their *protégé* was likely to experience from her mother; for in spite of the defects of her education, Mary was a general favourite in the family; and however they might solace themselves by depreciating her to Mrs. Douglas, to the world in general, and their young female acquaintances in particular, she was upheld as an epitome of every perfection above and below the sun. Had it been

possible for them to conceive that Mary could have been received with any thing short of rapture, Lady Juliana's letter might, in some measure, have opened the eyes of their understanding; but to the guileless sisters, it seemed every thing that was proper. Sorry for the necessity Mrs. Douglas felt under of parting with her adopted daughter—was "prettily expressed"—had no doubt it was merely a slight nervous affection, "was kind and soothing;" and the assurance, more than once repeated, that her friends might rely upon her being returned to them in the course of a very few months, "shewed a great deal of feeling and consideration." But as their minds never maintained a just equilibrium long upon any subject, but, like falsely adjusted scales, were ever hovering and vibrating at either extreme—so they could not rest satisfied in the belief that Mary was to be happy—there must be something to counteract that stilling sen-

timent; and that was the apprehension that Mary would be spoilt. This, for the present, was the pendulum of their imaginations.

"I declare, Mary, my sisters, and I, could get no sleep last night for thinking of you," said Miss Grizzy; "we are all certain that Lady Juliana especially, but indeed all your English relations, will think so much of you—from not knowing you, you know—which will be quite natural. I'm sure, that my sisters and I have taken it into our heads; but I hope it won't be the case, as you have a great deal of good sense of your own—that they will quite turn your head."

"Mary's head is on her shoulders to little purpose," followed up Miss Jacky, "if she can't stand being made of when she goes amongst strangers; and she ought to know by this time, that a mother's partiality is no proof of a child's merit."

"You hear that, Mary," rejoined Miss Grizzy: "So I'm sure I hope you won't mind a word that your mother says to you, I mean about yourself; for, of course, you know, she can't be such a good judge of you as us, who have known you all your life. As to other things, I daresay she is very well informed about the country, and politics, and these sort of things—I'm certain Lady Juliana knows a great deal."

"And I hope, Mary, you will take care and not get into the daadlin' handless ways of the English women," said Miss Nicky; "I wouldn't give a pin for an Englishwoman."

"And I hope you will never look at an Englishman, Mary," said Miss Grizzy, with equal earnestness; "take my word for it, they are a very dissipated unprincipled set. They all drink, and game, and keep race-horses; and many of them, I'm told, even keep play-actresses—So you may think

what it would be for all of us, if you was to marry any of them,"—and tears streamed from the good spinster's eyes, at the bare supposition of such a calamity.

"Don't be afraid, my dear aunt," said Mary, with a kind caress, "I shall come back to you your own 'Highland Mary.' No Englishman, with his round face and trim meadows, shall ever captivate me. Heath-covered hills, and high cheek bones, are the charms that must win my heart."

"I'm delighted to hear you say so, my dear Mary," said the literal minded Grizzy: "Certainly nothing can be prettier than the heather when it's in flower; and there is something very manly—nobody can dispute that—in high cheek bones: and besides, to tell you a secret, Lady Maclaughlan has a husband in her eye for you—We, none of us, can conceive who it is, but, of course, he must be suitable in every respect; for you know Lady Maclaughlan has had three husbands herself, so, of course,

she must be an excellent judge of a good husband."

"Or a bad one," said Mary, "which is the same thing. Warning is as good as example."

Mrs. Douglas' ideas and those of her aunts, did not coincide upon this occasion more than upon most others. In her sister-in-law's letter, she flattered herself she saw only fashionable indifference; and she fondly hoped that would soon give way to a tenderer sentiment, as her daughter became known to her. At any rate, it was proper that Mary should make the trial, and which ever way it ended, it must be for her advantage.

"Mary has already lived too long in these mountain solitudes," thought she; "her ideas will become romantic, and her taste fastidious. If it is dangerous to be too early initiated into the ways of the world, it is perhaps equally so to live too long secluded from it. Should she make

herself a place in the heart of her mother and sister, it will be so much happiness gained; and should it prove otherwise, it will be a lesson learnt—a hard one indeed! but hard are the lessons we must all learn in the school of life!" Yet Mrs. Douglas' fortitude almost failed her, as the period of separation approached.

It had been arranged by Lady Emily, that a carriage and servants should meet Mary at Edinburgh, whither Mr. Douglas was to convey her. The cruel moment came; and mother, sister, relations, friends, all the bright visions which Mary's sanguine spirit had conjured up to soften the parting pang, all were absorbed in one agonizing feeling—one overwhelming thought. O, who that for the first time has parted from the parent, whose tenderness and love were entwined with our earliest recollections, whose sympathy had soothed our infant sufferings, whose fondness had brightened our infant felicity;—who

that has a heart, but must have felt it sink beneath the anguish of a first farewell! Yet bitterer still must be the feelings of the parent upon committing the cherished object of their cares and affections to the stormy ocean of life. When experience points to the gathering cloud and rising surge which soon may assail their defenceless child, what can support the mother's heart, but trust in Him, whose eye slumbereth not, and whose power extendeth over all! It was this pious hope, this holy confidence, that enabled this more than mother to part from her adopted child with a resignation which no earthly motive could have imparted to her mind. It seems almost profanation, to mingle with her elevated feelings, the coarse, yet simple sorrows of the aunts, old and young, as they clung around the nearly lifeless Mary, each tendering the parting gift they had kept as a solace for the last.

Poor Miss Grizzy was more than usually incoherent, as she displayed "a nice new umbrella that could be turned into a nice walking-stick, or any thing;" and a dressing-box, with a little of every thing in it; and, with a fresh burst of tears, Mary was directed where she would *not* find eye-ointment, and where she was *not* to look for sticking-plaister.

Miss Jacky was more composed, as she presented a flaming copy of Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women, with a few suitable observations; but Miss Nicky could scarcely find voice to tell, that the *housewife* she now tendered, had once been Lady Girnachgowl's, and that it contained Whitechapel needles of every size and number. The younger ladies had clubbed for the purchase of a large locket, in which was enshrined a lock from each subscriber, tastefully arranged by the —— jeweller, in the form of a wheat sheaf, upon a blue ground. Even old Donald had his offer-

ing, and, as he stood tottering at the chaise door, he contrived to get a "bit snishin mull" laid on Mary's lap, with a "God bless her bonny face, an' may she ne'er want a good sneesh!"

The carriage drove off, and for a while Mary's eyes were closed in despair.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER VIII.

> "Farewell to the mountains, high covered with snow;
> Farewell to the straths, and green vallies below;
> Farewell to the forests, and wild hanging woods,
> Farewell to the torrents, and loud roaring floods!"
>
> *Scotch Song.*

Happily in the moral world, as in the material one, the warring elements have their prescribed bounds, and "the flood of grief decreaseth, when it can swell no higher;" but it is only by retrospection we can bring ourselves to believe in this obvious truth. The young and untried heart hugs itself in

the bitterness of its emotions, and takes a pride in believing, that its anguish can end but with its existence; and it is not till time hath almost steeped our senses in forgetfulness, that we discover the mutability of all human passions.

But Mary left it not to the slow hand of time to subdue in some measure the grief that swelled her heart. Had she given way to selfishness, she would have sought the free indulgence of her sorrow as the only mitigation of it; but she felt also for her uncle. He was depressed at parting with his wife and child, and he was taking a long and dreary journey entirely upon her account. Could she therefore be so selfish as to add to his uneasiness by a display of her sufferings? No—she would strive to conceal it from his observation, though to overcome it was impossible. Her feelings must ever remain the same, but she would confine them to her own breast; and she began to converse with, and even

strove to amuse her kind-hearted companion. Ever and anon, indeed, a rush of tender recollections came across her mind, and the soft voice, and the bland countenance of her maternal friend, seemed for a moment present to her senses; and then the dreariness and desolation that succeeded as the delusion vanished, and all was stillness and vacuity! Even self-reproach shot its piercing sting into her ingenuous heart; levities on which, in her usual gaiety of spirit, she had never bestowed a thought, now appeared to her as crimes of the deepest dye. She thought how often she had slighted the counsels and neglected the wishes of her gentle monitress; how she had wearied of her good old aunts, their cracked voices, and the everlasting *tic-a-tic* of their knitting needles; how coarse and vulgar she had sometimes deemed the younger ones; how she had mimicked Lady Maclaughlan, and caricatured Sir Sampson,

and "even poor dear old Donald," said she, as she summed up the catalogue of her crimes; could not escape my insolence and ill nature. How clever I thought it to sing 'Haud awa frae me, Donald,' and how affectedly I shuddered at every thing he touched;" and the "sneeshin mull" was bedewed with tears of affectionate contrition. But every painful sentiment was for a while suspended in admiration of the magnificent scenery that was spread around them. Though summer had fled, and few even of autumn's graces remained, yet over the august features of mountain scenery the seasons have little controul. Their charms depend not upon richness of verdure, or luxuriance of foliage, or any of the mere prettinesses of nature; but whether wrapped in snow, or veiled in mist, or glowing in sunshine, their lonely grandeur remains the same; and the same feelings fill and elevate the soul in contemplating these

mighty works of an Almighty hand. The eye is never weary in watching the thousand varieties of light and shade, as they flit over the mountain, and gleam upon the lake; and the ear is satisfied with the awful stillness of nature in her solitude.

Others besides Mary seemed to have taken a fanciful pleasure in combining the ideas of the mental and elemental world, for in the dreary dwelling where they were destined to pass the night, she found inscribed the following lines :—

"The busy winds war mid the waving boughs,
And darkly rolls the heaving surge to land ;
Among the flying clouds the moon-beam glows
With colours foreign to its softness bland.

Here, one dark shadow melts, in gloom profound,
The towering Alps—the guardians of the Lake ;
There, one bright gleam sheds silver light around,
And shews the threat'ning strife that tempests wake.

Thus o'er my mind a busy memory plays,
That shakes the feelings to their inmost core ;
Thus beams the light of Hope's fallacious rays,
When simple confidence can trust no more.

So one dark shadow shrouds each by-gone hour,
So one bright gleam the coming tempest shews;
That tells of sorrows, which, though past, still lower,
And *this* reveals th' approach of future woes."

While Mary was trying to decypher these somewhat mystic lines, her uncle was carrying on a colloquy in Gaelic with their hostess. The consequences of the consultation were not of the choicest description, consisting of braxy * mutton, raw potatoes, wet bannocks, hard cheese, and whisky. Very differently would the travellers have fared, had the good Nicky's intentions been fulfilled. She had prepared with her own hands a moorfowl-pye and potted nowt's head, besides a profusion of what she termed "trifles, just for Mary, poor thing! to divert herself with upon the road." But alas! in the anguish of separation, the covered basket had been forgot,

* Sheep that have died a natural death, and been salted.

and the labour of Miss Nicky's hands fell to be consumed by the family, though Miss Grizzy protested, with tears in her eyes, "that it went to her heart like a knife, to eat poor Mary's puffs and snaps."

Change of air, and variety of scene, failed not to produce the happiest effects upon Mary's languid frame and drooping spirits. Her cheek already glowed with health, and was sometimes dimpled with smiles. She still wept indeed as she thought of those she had left; but often while the tear trembled in her eye, its course was arrested by wonder, or admiration, or delight; for every object had its charms for her. Her cultivated taste and unsophisticated mind could descry beauty in the form of a hill, and grandeur in the foam of the wave, and elegance in the weeping birch, as it dipped its now almost leafless boughs in the mountain stream. These simple pleasures, unknown alike to the sordid mind and vi-

tiated taste, are ever exquisitely enjoyed by the refined yet unsophisticated child of nature.

CHAPTER IX.

"Her native sense improved by reading,
Her native sweetness by good breeding."

During their progress through the Highlands, the travellers were hospitably entertained at the mansions of the country gentlemen, where old fashioned courtesy, and modern comfort, combined to cheer the stranger guest. But upon *coming out*, as it is significantly expressed by the natives of these mountain regions, viz. entering the low country, they found they had only made

a change of difficulties. In the Highlands they were always sure, that wherever there was a house, that house would be to them a home; but on a fair-day in the little town of G. they found themselves in the midst of houses, and surrounded by people, yet unable to procure rest or shelter.

At the only inn the place afforded, they were informed, "The horses were baith oot, an' the ludgin' a' tane up, an' mair tu;" while the driver asserted, what indeed was apparent, "that his beasts war nae fit to gang the length o' their tae farrer—no for the king himsel'."

At this moment, a stout, florid, good-humoured-looking man passed whistling "Roy's Wife" with all his heart; and just as Mr. Douglas was stepping out of the carriage to try what could be done, the same person, evidently attracted by curiosity, repassed, changing his tune to "There's cauld kail in Aberdeen."

He started at sight of Mr. Douglas; then eagerly grasping his hand, "Ah! Archie Douglas, is this you?" exclaimed he with a loud laugh, and hearty shake. "What! you haven't forgot your old schoolfellow Bob Gawffaw?"

A mutual recognition now took place, and much pleasure was manifested on both sides at this unexpected rencontre. No time was allowed to explain their embarrassments, for Mr. Gawffaw had already tipped the post-boy the wink, (which he seemed easily to comprehend); and forcing Mr. Douglas to resume his seat in the carriage, he jumped in himself.

"Now for Howffend, and Mrs. Gawffaw! ha, ha, ha! This will be a surprise upon her. She thinks I'm in my barn all this time—ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Douglas here began to express his astonishment at his friend's precipitation, and his apprehensions as to the trouble they might occasion Mrs. Gawffaw; but

bursts of laughter and broken expressions of delight were the only replies he could procure from his friend.

After jolting over half a mile of very bad road, the carriage stopped at a mean vulgar-looking mansion, with dirty windows, ruinous thatched offices, and broken fences. Such was the picture of still life. That of animated nature was not less picturesque. Cows bellowed, and cart horses neighed, and pigs grunted, and geese gabbled, and ducks quacked, and cocks and hens flapped and fluttered promiscuously, as they mingled, in a sort of yard, divided from the house by a low dyke, possessing the accommodation of a crazy gate, which was bestrode by a parcel of bare-legged boys.

"What are you about, you confounded rascals!" called Mr. Gawffaw to them.

"Naething," answered one.

"We're just takin' a heize on the yett," answered another.

"I'll heize ye, ye scoundrels!" exclaimed the incensed Mr. Gawffaw, as he burst from the carriage; and, snatching the driver's whip from his hand, flew after the more nimble-footed culprits.

Finding his efforts to overtake them in vain, he returned to the door of his mansion, where stood his guests, waiting to be ushered in. He opened the door himself, and led the way to a parlour, which was quite of a piece with the exterior of the dwelling. A dim dusty table stood in the middle of the floor, heaped with a variety of heterogenous articles of dress: an exceeding dirty volume of a novel lay open amongst them. The floor was littered with shapings of flannel, and shreds of gauzes, ribbons, &c. The fire was almost out, and the hearth was covered with ashes.

After insisting upon his guests being seated, Mr. Gawffaw walked to the door of the apartment, and hallooed out, "Mrs.

Gawffaw—ho! May, my dear!—I say, Mrs. Gawffaw!"

A low, croaking, querulous voice was now heard in reply, "For heaven's sake, Mr. Gawffaw, make less noise! For God's sake, have mercy on the walls of your house, if you've none on my poor head!" And thereupon entered Mrs. Gawffaw, a cap in one hand, which she appeared to have been tying on—a smelling-bottle in the other.

She possessed a considerable share of insipid, and somewhat faded, beauty, but disguised by a tawdry trumpery style of dress, and rendered almost disgusting by the air of affectation, folly, and peevishness, that overspread her whole person and deportment. She testified the utmost surprise and coldness at sight of her guests; and, as she entered, Mr. Gawffaw rushed out, having descried something passing in the yard that called for his interposition. Mr. Douglas was therefore under the necessity

of introducing himself and Mary to their ungracious hostess; briefly stating the circumstances that had led them to be her guests, and dwelling, with much warmth, on the kindness and hospitality of her husband in having relieved them from their embarrassment. A gracious smile, or what was intended as such, beamed over Mrs. Gawffaw's face at first mention of their names.

"Excuse me, Mr. Douglas," said she, making a profound reverence to him, and another to Mary, while she waved her hand for them to be seated. "Excuse me, Miss Douglas; but, situated as I am, I find it necessary to be very distant to Mr. Gawffaw's friends sometimes. He is a thoughtless man, Mr. Douglas; a very thoughtless man. He makes a perfect inn of his house. He never lies out of the town, trying who he can pick up, and bring home with him. It is seldom I am so fortunate as to see such guests as Mr. and Miss Douglas of

Glenfern Castle in my house," with an elegant bow to each, which, of course, was duly returned. "But Mr. Gawffaw would have shewn more consideration, both for you and me, had he apprised me of the honour of your visit, instead of bringing you here in this ill-bred, unceremonious manner. As for me, I am too well accustomed to him to be hurt at these things now. He has kept me in hot water, I may say, since the day I married him!"

In spite of the conciliatory manner in which this agreeable address was made, Mr. Douglas felt considerably disconcerted, and again renewed his apologies, adding something about hopes of being able to proceed.

"Make no apologies, my dear sir," said the lady, with what she deemed a most bewitching manner, "it affords me the greatest pleasure to see any of your family under my roof. I meant no reflection on you, it is entirely Mr. Gawffaw that is to

blame, in not having apprised me of the honour of this visit, that I might not have been caught in this *déshabille ;* but I was really so engaged by my studies," pointing to the dirty Novel, " that I was quite unconscious of the lapse of time." The guests felt more and more at a loss what to say. But the lady was at none. Seeing Mr. Douglas still standing with his hat in his hand, and his eye directed towards the door, she resumed her discourse.

" Pray be seated, Mr. Douglas—I beg you will sit off the door. Miss Douglas, I entreat you will walk into the fire—I hope you will consider yourself as quite at home"—another elegant bend to each. " I only regret that Mr. Gawffaw's folly and ill-breeding should have brought you into this disagreeable situation, Mr. Douglas. He is a well meaning man, Mr. Douglas, and a good hearted man ; but he is very deficient in other respects, Mr. Douglas."

Mr. Douglas, happy to find any thing to

which he could assent, warmly joined in the eulogium on the excellence of his friend's heart. It did not appear, however, to give the satisfaction he expected. The lady resumed with a sigh, "Nobody can know Mr. Gawffaw's heart better than I do, Mr. Douglas. It *is* a good one, but it is far from being an elegant one; it is one in which I find no congeniality of sentiment with my own. Indeed, Mr. Gawffaw is no companion for me, nor I for him, Mr. Douglas—he is never happy in my society, and I really believe he would rather sit down with the tinklers on the road side, as spend a day in my company."

A deep sigh followed; but its pathos was drowned in the obstreporous ha, ha, ha! of her joyous helpmate, as he bounced into the room, wiping his forehead.

"Why, May, my dear, what have you been about to-day; things have been all going to the deuce. Why didn't you hin-

der these boys from sweein' the gate off its hinges, and—"

"Me hinder boys from sweein' gates, Mr. Gawffaw! Do I look like as if I was capable of hindering boys from sweein' gates, Miss Douglas?"

"Well, my dear, you ought to look after your pigs a little better. That jade, black Jess, has trod a parcel of them to death, ha, ha, ha! and—"

"Me look after pigs, Mr. Gawffaw! I'm really astonished at you!" again interrupted the lady, turning pale with vexation. Then, with an affected giggle, appealing to Mary, "I leave you to judge, Miss Douglas, if I look like a person made for running after pigs!"

"Indeed," thought Mary, "you don't look like as if you could do any thing half so useful."

"Well, never mind the pigs, my dear; only don't give us any of them for dinner—

ha, ha, ha!—and, May, when will you let us have it?"

"Me let you have it, Mr. Gawffaw! I'm sure I don't hinder you from having it when you please, only you know I prefer late hours myself. I was always accustomed to them in my poor father's lifetime—he never dined before four o'clock; and I seldom knew what it was to be in my bed before twelve o'clock at night, Miss Douglas, till I married Mr. Gawffaw!"

Mary tried to look sorrowful, to hide the smile that was dimpling her cheek.

"Come, let us have something to eat in the meantime, my dear."

"I'm sure you may eat the house, if you please, for me, Mr. Gawffaw! What would you take, Miss Douglas?—but pull the bell—Softly, Mr. Gawffaw! you do every thing so violently."

A dirty maid-servant, with bare feet, answered the summons.

"Where's Tom?" demanded the lady, well knowing that Tom was afar off at some of the farm operations.

"I ken nae whar he's. He'll be aether at the patatees, or the horses, I'se warran. Div ye want him?"

"Bring some glasses," said her mistress, with an air of great dignity. "Mr. Gawffaw, you must see about the wine yourself, since you have sent Tom out of the way."

Mr. Gawffaw and his handmaid were soon heard in an adjoining closet; the one wondering where the screw was, the other vociferating for a knife to cut the bread; while the mistress of this well-regulated mansion sought to divert her guests' attention from what was passing, by entertaining them with complaints of Mr. Gawffaw's noise, and her maid's insolence, till the parties appeared to speak for themselves.

After being refreshed with some very bad wine, and old baked bread, the gentlemen set off on a survey of the farm, and the ladies repaired to their toilettes. Mary's simple dress was quickly adjusted; and, upon descending, she found her uncle alone in what Mrs. Gawffaw had shewn to her as the drawing-room. He guessed her curiosity to know something of her hosts; and therefore briefly informed her that Mrs. Gawffaw was the daughter of a trader in some manufacturing town, who had lived in opulence, and died insolvent. During his life, his daughter had eloped with Bob Gawffaw, then a gay lieutenant in a marching regiment, who had been esteemed a very lucky fellow in getting the pretty Miss Croaker, with the prospect of ten thousand pounds. None thought more highly of her husband's good fortune than the lady herself; and though *her* fortune never was realized, she gave herself all the

airs of having been the making of his. At this time, Mr. Gawffaw was a reduced lieutenant, living upon a small paternal property, which he pretended to farm; but the habits of a military life, joined to a naturally social disposition, were rather inimical to the pursuits of agriculture, and most of his time was spent in loitering about the village of G. where he generally continued either to pick up a guest, or procure a dinner.

Mrs. Gawffaw despised her husband; had weak nerves and headachs—was above managing her house—read novels—dyed ribbons—and altered her gowns according to every pattern she could see or hear of.

Such were Mr. and Mrs. Gawffaw—one of the many ill-assorted couples in this world—joined, not matched. A sensible man would have curbed her folly and peevishness: A good tempered woman would

have made his home comfortable, and rendered him more domestic.

The dinner was such as might have been expected from the previous specimens—bad of its kind, cold, ill dressed, and slovenly set down; but Mrs. Gawffaw seemed satisfied with herself and it.

"This is very fine mutton, Mr. Douglas, and not under-done to most people's tastes—and this fowl, I have no doubt will eat well, Miss Douglas, though it is not so white as some I have seen."

"The fowl, my dear, looks as if it had been the great-grandmother of this sheep, ha, ha, ha!"

"For heaven's sake, Mr. Gawffaw, make less noise, or my head will split in a thousand pieces!" putting her hands to it, as if to hold the frail tenement together. This was always her refuge when at a loss for a reply.

A very ill-concocted pudding next called forth her approbation.

"This pudding should be good; for it is the same I used to be so partial to in my poor father's life time! when I was used to every delicacy, Miss Douglas, that money could purchase."

"But you thought me the greatest delicacy of all, my dear, ha, ha, ha! for you left all your other delicacies for me, ha, ha, ha!—what do you say to that May, ha, ha, ha!"

May's reply consisted in putting her hands to her head, with an air of inexpressible vexation; and finding all her endeavours to be elegant, fustrated by the overpowering vulgarity of her husband, she remained silent during the remainder of the repast; solacing herself with complacent glances at her yellow silk gown, and adjusting the gold chains and necklaces that adorned her bosom.

Poor Mary was doomed to a *tete-à-tête* with her during the whole evening; for Mr. Gawffaw was too happy *with* his friend,

and *without* his wife, to quit the dining-room till a late hour; and then he was so much exhilarated, that she could almost have joined Mrs. Gawffaw in her exclamation of "For heaven's sake, Mr. Gawffaw, have mercy on my head!"

The night, however, like all other nights, had a close; and Mrs. Gawffaw, having once more enjoyed the felicity of finding herself in company at twelve o'clock at night, at length withdrew; and having apologised, and hoped, and feared, for another hour in Mary's apartment, she finally left her to the blessings of solitude and repose.

As Mr. Douglas was desirous of reaching Edinburgh the following day, he had, in spite of the urgent remonstrances of his friendly host, and the elegant importunities of his lady, ordered the carriage at an early hour; and Mary was too eager to quit Howffend to keep it waiting. Mr. Gawffaw was in readiness to hand her in,

but fortunately Mrs. Gawffaw's head did not permit of her rising. With much the same hearty laugh that had welcomed their meeting, honest Gawffaw now saluted the departure of his friend; and as he went whistling over his gate, he ruminated sweet and bitter thoughts as to the destinies of the day—whether he should solace himself with a good dinner, and the company of Bailie Merrythought, at the Cross Keys in G. or put up with cold mutton, and May, at home.

CHAPTER X.

> "Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
> All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
> Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
> Sat legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!"
>
> BURNS.

ALL Mary's sensations of admiration were faint, compared to those she experienced as she viewed the Scottish metropolis. It was associated in her mind, with all the local prepossessions to which youth and enthusiasm love to give "a local habitation and a name;" and visions of older times

floated o'er her mind, as she gazed on its rocky battlements, and traversed the lonely arcades of its deserted palace.

"And this was once a gay court!" thought she, as she listened to the dreary echo of her own footsteps; "and this very ground on which I now stand, was trod by the hapless Mary Stuart! Her eye beheld the same objects that mine now rests upon; her hand has touched the draperies I now hold in mine. These frail memorials remain; but, what remains of Scotland's Queen but a blighted name!"

Even the blood-stained chamber possessed a nameless charm for Mary's vivid imagination. She had not entirely escaped the superstitions of the country in which she had lived; and she readily yielded her assent to the asseverations of her guide, as to its being the *bona fide* blood of *David Rizzio*, which, for nearly three hundred years, had resisted all human efforts to efface.

"My credulity is so harmless," said she in answer to her uncle's attempt to laugh her out of her belief, "that I surely may be permitted to indulge it—especially since, I confess, I feel a sort of indescribable pleasure in it."

"You take a pleasure in the sight of blood!" exclaimed Mr. Douglas in astonishment, "you who turn pale at sight of a cut finger, and shudder at a leg of mutton with the juice in it!"

"Oh! mere modern vulgar blood is very shocking," answered Mary with a smile; "but observe how this is mellowed by time into a tint that could not offend the most fastidious fine lady; besides," added she in a graver tone, "I own I love to believe in things supernatural; it seems to connect us more with another world, than when every thing is seen to proceed in the mere ordinary course of nature, as it is called. I cannot bear to imagine a dreary chasm

betwixt the inhabitants of this world, and beings of a higher sphere; I love to fancy myself surrounded by——"

"I wish to heaven you would remember you are surrounded by rational beings, and not fall into such rhapsodies," said her uncle, glancing at a party, who stood near them, jesting upon all the objects which Mary had been regarding with so much veneration. "But, come, you have been long enough here. Let us try whether a breeze on the Calton Hill will not dispel these cobwebs from your brain."

The day, though cold, was clear and sunny; and the lovely spectacle before them shone forth in all its gay magnificence. The blue waters lay calm and motionless. The opposite shores glowed in a thousand varied tints of wood and plain, rock and mountain, cultured field, and purple moor. Beneath, the old town reared its dark brow, and the new one stretched its golden lines; while, all around, the va-

ried charms of nature lay scattered in that profusion, which nature's hand alone can bestow.

"Oh! this is exquisite!" exclaimed Mary after a long pause, in which she had been rivetted in admiration of the scene before her. "And you are in the right, my dear uncle. The ideas which are inspired by the contemplation of such a spectacle as this, are far—oh how far!—superior to those excited by the mere works of art. There, I can, at best, think but of the inferior agents of Providence: Here, the soul rises from nature up to nature's God."

"Upon my soul, you will be taken for a Methodist, Mary, if you talk in this manner," said Mr. Douglas, with some marks of disquiet, as he turned round at the salutation of a fat elderly gentleman, whom he presently recognised as Bailie Broadfoot.

The first salutations over, Mr. Douglas' fears of Mary having been overheard recurred, and he felt anxious to remove any

unfavourable impression with regard to his own principles, at least, from the mind of the enlightened magistrate.

"Your fine views here have set my niece absolutely raving," said he with a smile; "but I tell her it is only in romantic minds that fine scenery inspires romantic ideas. I daresay many of the worthy inhabitants of Edinburgh walk here with no other idea than that of sharpening their appetites for dinner."

"Nae doot," said the Baillie, "it's a most capital place for that. Were it no' for that, I ken nae muckle use it would be of."

"You speak from experience of its virtues in that respect, I suppose?" said Mr. Douglas gravely.

"'Deed, as to that I canna compleen. At times, to be sure, I am troubled with a little kind of a squeamishness after our public interteenments; but three rounds o' the hill sets a' to rights."

Then observing Mary's eyes exploring, as he supposed, the town of Leith, "You see that prospeck to nae advantage the day, Miss," said he. "If the glass-houses had been workin', it would have looked as weel again. Ye hae nae glass-houses in the Highlands; na, na."

The Bailie had a share in the concern; and the volcanic clouds of smoke that issued from thence were far more interesting subjects of speculation to him than all the eruptions of Vesuvius or Etna. But there was nothing to charm the lingering view to-day; and he therefore proposed their taking a look at Bridewell, which, next to the smoke from the glass-houses, he reckoned the object most worthy of notice. It was, indeed, deserving of the praises bestowed upon it; and Mary was giving her whole attention to the details of it, when she was suddenly startled by hearing her own name wailed in piteous accents from one of the lower cells, and, upon turning

round, she discovered in the prisoner the son of one of the tenants of Glenfern. Duncan M'Free had been always looked upon as a very honest lad in the Highlands, but he had left home to push his fortune as a pedlar; and the temptations of the low country having proved too much for his virtue, poor Duncan was now expiating his offence in durance vile.

"I shall have a pretty account of you to carry to Glenfern," said Mr. Douglas, regarding the culprit with his sternest look.

"O deed, Sir, it's no' my faut!" answered Duncan, blubbering bitterly; "but there's nae freedom at a' in this country. Lord, an' I war oot o't! Ane canna ca' their head their ain in't; for ye canna lift the bouk o' a prin, but they're a' upon ye." And a fresh burst of sorrow ensued.

Finding the *peccadillo* was of a venial nature, Mr. Douglas besought the Bailie to use his interest to procure the enfran-

chisement of this his vassal, which Mr. Broadfoot, happy to oblige a good customer, promised should be obtained on the following day; and Duncan's emotions being rather clamorous, the party found it necessary to withdraw.

"And noo," said the Baillie, as they emerged from this place of dole and durance, "will ye step up to the monument, and tak a rest and some refreshment?"

"Rest and refreshment in a monument!" exclaimed Mr. Douglas. "Excuse me, my good friend, but we are not inclined to bait there yet a while."

The Bailie did not comprehend the joke; and he proceeded in his own drawling humdrum accent, to assure them, that the monument was a most convenient place.

"It was erected in honor of Lord Neilson's memory," said he," and is let aff to a pastry cook and confectioner, where you can always find some trifles to treat the ladies, such as pies and custards, and ber-

ries, and these sort of things: but we passed an order in the cooncil, that there should be naething of a spirituous nature introduced; for, if ance spirits got admittance, there's no saying what might happen."

This was a fact which none of the party were disposed to dispute; and the Bailie, triumphing in his dominion over the spirits, shuffled on before to do the honors of this place, appropriated at one and the same time to the manes of a hero, and the making of minced pies. The regale was admirable, and Mary could not help thinking times were improved, and that it was a better thing to eat tarts in Lord Nelson's Monument, than to have been poisoned in Julius Cæsar's.

CHAPTER XI.

"Having a tongue rough as a cat, and biting like an adder, and all their reproofs are direct scoldings, their common intercourse is open contumely."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

"THOUGH last, not least of nature's works, I must now introduce you to a friend of mine," said Mr. Douglas, as, the Bailie having made his bow, they bent their steps towards the Castle Hill. "Mrs. Violet Macshake is an aunt of my mother's, whom you must often have heard of, and the last remaining branch of the noble race of Girnachgowl."

"I am afraid she is rather a formidable person, then?" said Mary.

Her uncle hesitated—" No, not formidable—only rather particular, as all old people are; but she is very good-hearted."

" I understand, in other words, she is very disagreeable. All ill-tempered people, I observe, have the character of being good-hearted; or else all good people are ill-tempered, I can't tell which."

" It is more than reputation with her, said Mr. Douglas, somewhat angrily; " for she is, in reality, a very good-hearted woman, as I experienced when a boy at college. Many a crown piece and half-guinea I used to get from her. Many a scold, to be sure, went along with them; but that, I daresay, I deserved. Besides, she is very rich, and I am her reputed heir; therefore gratitude and self-interest combine to render her extremely amiable in my estimation."

They had now reached the airy dwelling where Mrs. Macshake resided, and having rung, the door was at length most delibe-

rately opened, by an ancient, sour visaged, long waisted female, who ushered them into an apartment, the *coup d'œil* of which struck a chill to Mary's heart. It was a good sized room, with a bare sufficiency of small legged dining tables, and lank hair-cloth chairs, ranged in high order round the walls. Although the season was advanced, and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel; and the mistress of the mansion was seated by the side of it in an arm-chair, still in its summer position. She appeared to have no other occupation than what her own meditations afforded; for a single glance sufficed to shew, that not a vestige of book or work was harboured there. She was a tall, large boned woman, whom even Time's iron hand scarcely bent, as she merely stooped at the shoulders. She had a drooping snuffy nose—a long turned-up chin—small quick grey eyes, and her face projected far beyond her figure, with an

expression of shrewd restless curiosity. She wore a mode, (not *à-la-mode*,) bonnet, and cardinal of the same; a pair of clogs over her shoes, and black silk mittens on her arms.

As soon as she recognised Mr. Douglas, she welcomed him with much cordiality, shook him long and heartily by the hand—patted him on the back—looked into his face with much seeming satisfaction; and in short, gave all the demonstrations of gladness usual with gentlewomen of a certain age. Her pleasure, however, appeared to be rather an *impromptu* than an habitual feeling; for as the surprise wore off, her visage resumed its harsh and sarcastic expression, and she seemed eager to efface any agreeable impression her reception might have excited.

"An wha thought o' seein ye enow," said she, in a quick gabbling voice; "what's brought you to the toon? are ye come to

spend your honest faither's siller, e'er he's weel cauld in his grave, puir man."

Mr. Douglas explained, that it was upon account of his niece's health.

"Health!" repeated she, with a sardonic smile, "it wad mak an ool laugh to hear the wark that's made aboot young fowk's health noo-a-days. I wonder what yer'e aw made o'," grasping Mary's arm in her great bony hand—"a wheen puir feckless windlestraes—ye maun awa to Ingland for yere healths.—Set ye up! I wunder what cam o' the lasses i' my time, that bute to bide at hame? And whilk o' ye, I'sude like to ken, 'll ere leive to see ninety-sax, like me—Health! he, he!"

Mary, glad of a pretence to indulge the mirth the old lady's manner and appearance had excited, joined most heartily in the laugh.

"Tak aff ye're bannet, bairn, an let me see ye're face; wha can tell what like ye are wi' that snule o' a thing onye're head."

Then after taking an accurate survey of her face, she pushed aside her pelisse—"Weel, it's ae mercy, I see ye hae neither the red heed, nor the muckle cuits o' the Douglasses. I ken nae whuther ye're faither had them or no. I ne'er set een on him: neither him, nor his braw leddie, thought it worth their while to speer after me; but I was at nae loss, by aw accounts."

"You have not asked after any of your Glenfern friends," said Mr. Douglas, hoping to touch a more sympathetic chord.

"Time eneugh—wull ye let me draw my breath, man—fowk canna say aw thing at ance.—An ye bute to hae an Inglish wife tu, a Scotch lass wad nae serr ye—An ye're wean, I'se warran', it's ane o' the warld's wonders—it's been unca lang o' cummin—he, he!"

"He has begun life under very melancholy auspices, poor fellow!" said Mr. Douglas, in allusion to his father's death.

"An wha's faut was that?—I ne'er heard tell the like o't, to hae the bairn kirsened an'

its grandfather deein!—But fowk are naither born, nor kirsened, nor do they wad or dee as they used to du—aw, thing's changed."

"You must, indeed, have witnessed many changes," observed Mr. Douglas, rather at a loss how to utter any thing of a conciliatory nature.

"Changes!—weel a waat, I sometimes wunder if it's the same waurld, an if it's my ain heed that's upon my shoothers."

"But with these changes, you must also have seen many improvements?" said Mary, in a tone of diffidence.

"Impruvements!" turning sharply round upon her, "what ken ye about impruvements, bairn? A bony impruvement or ens no, to see tyleyors and sclaters leavin, whar I mind Jewks an Yerls—An that great glowrin new toon there," pointing out of her windows, "whar I used to sit an luck oot at bonny green parks, and see the coos milket, and the bits o' bairnys rowin an' tumm-

lin, an' the lasses trampin i' their tubs—What see I noo, but stane an lime, an stoor [illegible]t, an idle cheels, an dinket-oot ma-[illegible]acin'.—Impruvements indeed!"

[illegible]ry found she was not likely to advance her uncle's fortune by the judiciousness of her remarks, therefore prudently resolved to hazard no more. Mr. Douglas, who was more *au fait* to the prejudices of old age, and who was always amused with her bitter remarks, when they did not touch himself, encouraged her to continue the conversation by some observation on the prevailing manners.

"Mainars!" repeated she, with a contemptuous laugh, "what caw ye mainers noo, for I dinna ken; ilk ane gangs bang in till their neebor's hooss, and bang oo't o't as it war a chynge hooss; an as for the maister o't, he's no o' sae muckle vaalu as the flunky ahint his chyre. I' my grandfather's time, as I hae heard him tell, ilka maister o' a faamily had his ain sate in his

ane hooss aye, an sat wi' his hat on his heed afore the best o' the land, an had his [illegible] dish, an was aye helpit first, an ke[illegible] his owthority as a man sude du. [illegible] war paurents then—bairnes dardna set up their gabs afore them than as they du noo. They ne'er presumed to say their heeds war their ain i' thae days—wife an servants—reteeners an' childer, aw trummelt i' the presence o' their heed."

Here a long pinch of snuff caused a pause in the old lady's harangue; but after having duly wiped her nose with her coloured handkerchief, and shook off all the particles that might be presumed to have lodged upon her cardinal, she resumed—

"An nae word o' ony o' your sisters gawn to get husbands yet? They tell me they're but coorse lasses: an' wha'll tak ill-farred tocherless queans, when there's walth o' bonny faces an' lang purses i' the market—He, he!" Then resuming her scrutiny of Mary—"An' I'se warren ye'll be lucken

for an Inglish sweetheart tu; that'll be what's takin' ye awa to Ingland."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Douglas, (as Mary was too much frightened to answer for herself)—"On the contrary, Mary declares she will never marry any but a true Highlander; one who wears the dirk and plaid, and has the second-sight. And the nuptials are to be celebrated with all the pomp of feudal times; with bagpipes, and bonfires, and gatherings of clans, and roasted sheep, and barrels of whisky, and ——"

"Weel a wat an' she's i' the right there," interrupted Mrs. Macshake, with more complacency than she had yet shewn.—"They may caw them what they like, but there's nae waddins noo. Wha's the better o' them but innkeepers and chise-drivers? I wud nae count mysel married i' the hiddlins way they gang aboot it noo."

"I daresay you remember these things

done in a very different style?" said Mr. Douglas.

"I dinna mind them whan they w ng the best; but I hae heard my m what a bonny ploy was at her waddi I canna tell ye hoo mony was at it; mair nor the room wad haud, ye may be sure, for every relation an' freend o' baith sides war there, as well they sude; an' aw in full dress: the leddies in their hoops round them, an' some o' them had sutten up aw night till hae their heads drest; for they hadnae thae pooket-like taps ye hae noo," looking with contempt at Mary's Grecian contour. "An' the bride's goon was aw shewed ow'r wi' favors, frae the tap doon to the tail, an' aw roond the neck, an' aboot the sleeves; and, as soon as the ceremony was ow'r, ilk ane ran till her an' rugget an' rave at her for the favors, till they hardly left the claise upon her back. Than they did nae run awa as they du

noo, but sax an' thretty o' them sat doon till a graund denner, and there was a ball at night, an' ilka night till Sabbath cam roond; an' than the bride an' the bride-groom, drest in their waddin suits, and aw their friends in theirs, wi' their favors on their breests, walkit in procession till the kirk. An' was nae that something like a waddin? It was worth while to be mar-ried i' thae days—He, he!"

"The wedding seems to have been ad-mirably conducted," said Mr. Douglas, with much solemnity. "The christening, I presume, would be the next distinguished event in the family?"

"Troth, Archie—an' ye sude keep your thoomb upon kirsnins as lang's ye leeve; your's was a bonnie kirsnin or ens no! I hae heard o' mony things, but a bairn kir-sened whan it's grandfaither was i' the deed-thraw, I ne'er heard tell o' before."—Then observing the indignation that spread

over Mr. Douglas' face, she quickly resumed, " An' so ye think the kirsnin was the neist ploy ?—He, he ! Na ; the cryin was a ploy, for the leddies did nae keep themsels up than as they do noo ; but the day after the bairn was born, the leddy sat up i' her bed, wi' her fan intill her hand ; an' aw her freends cam an stud roond her, an' drank her health an' the bairn's. Than at the leddy's recovery, there was a graund supper gien that they caw'd the *cummerfealls,* an' there was a great pyramid o' hens at the tap o' the table, an' anither pyramid o' ducks at the fit, an' a muckle stoup fu' o' posset i' the middle, an' aw kinds o' sweeties doon the sides ; an' as sune as ilk ane had eatin their fill, they aw flew till the sweetys, an' fought, an' strave, an' wrastled for them, leddies an' gentlemen an' aw ; for the brag was, wha could pocket maist ; an' whiles they wad hae the claith aff the table, an' aw thing i' the middle i'

the floor, an' the chyres upside doon. Oo! muckle gude diversion, I'se warran, was at the *cummerfeals*—Than whan they had drank the stoup dry, that ended the ploy. As for the kirkin, that was aye whar it sude be—i' the hooss o' God, an' aw the kith an' kin bye in full dress, an' a band o' maiden cimmers aw in white; an' a bonny sight it was, as I've heard my mither tell."

Mr. Douglas, who was now rather tired of the old lady's reminiscences, availed himself of the opportunity of a fresh pinch, to rise and take leave.

"Oo, what's takin ye awa, Archie, in sic a hurry? Sit doon there," laying her hand upon his arm, "an' rest ye, an' tak a glass o' wine, an' a bit breed; or may be," turning to Mary, "ye wad rather hae a drap broth to warm ye. What gars ye luck sae blae, bairn? I'm sure its no cauld; but ye're juste like the lave: ye gang aw skiltin aboot the streets half naked, an'

than ye maun sit an' birsle yoursels afore the fire at hame."

She had now shuffled along to the further end of the room, and opening a press, took out wine, and a plateful of various-shaped articles of bread, which she handed to Mary.

"Hae bairn—tak a cookie—tak it up—what are you fear'd for?—it'll no bite ye. Here's t'ye, Glenfern, an' your wife, an' your wean, puir tead, it's no had a very chancy ootset, weel a wat."

The wine being drank, and the cookies discussed, Mr. Douglas made another attempt to withdraw, but in vain.

"Canna ye sit still a wee, man, an' let me spear after my auld freens at Glenfern. Hoo's Grizzy, an' Jacky, and Nicky?—aye workin awa at the pills an' the drogs—he, he! I ne'er swallowed a pill, nor gied a doit for drogs aw my days, an' see an ony of them'll rin a race wi' me whan they're naur five score."

Mr. Douglas here paid her some compliments upon her appearance, which were pretty graciously received; and added that he was the bearer of a letter from his aunt Grizzy, which he would send along with a roebuck and brace of moor-game.

"Gin your roebuck's nae better than your last, atweel its no worth the sendin': poor dry fisinless dirt, no worth the chowing; weel a wat, I begrudged my teeth on't. Your muirfowl was na that ill, but they're no worth the carryin; they're dong cheap i' the market enoo, so its nae great compliment. Gin ye had brought me a leg o' gude mutton, or a cauler sawmont, there would hae been some sense in't; but ye're ane o' the fowk that'll neer harry yoursel wi' your presents; it's but the pickle poother they cost you, an' I'se warran ye're thinkin mair o' your ain diversion than o' my stamick, when ye're at the shootin' o' them, puir beasts."

Mr. Douglas had borne the various indignities levelled against himself and his family with a philosophy that had no parallel in his life before; but to this attack upon his game, he was not proof. His colour rose, his eyes flashed fire, and something resembling an oath burst from his lips, as he strode indignantly towards the door.

His friend, however, was too nimble for him. She stepped before him, and, breaking into a discordant laugh, as she patted him on the back, "So I see ye're just the auld man, Archie,—ay ready to tak the strums, an' ye dinna get a' thing ye're ain wye. Mony a time I had to fleech ye oot o' the dorts whan ye was a callant. Div ye mind hoo ye was affronted because I set ye doon to a cauld pigeon-pye, an' a tanker o' tippenny, ae night to ye're fowerhoors, afore some leddies—he, he, he! Weel a wat, ye're wife maun hae her ain adoos to

manage ye, for ye're a cumstairy chield, Archie."

Mr. Douglas still looked as if he was irresolute whether to laugh or be angry.

"Come, come, sit ye doon there till I speak to this bairn," said she, as she pulled Mary into an adjoining bed-chamber, which wore the same aspect of chilly neatness as the one they had quitted. Then pulling a huge bunch of keys from her pocket, she opened a drawer, out of which she took a pair of diamond ear-rings. "Hae, bairn," said she as she stuffed them into Mary's hand; "they belanged to your faither's grandmother. She was a gude woman, an' had four-an'-twenty sons an' dochters, an' I wiss ye nae war fortin than just to hae as mony. But mind ye," with a shake of her bony finger, "they maun a' be Scots. Gin I thought ye wad mairry ony pock-puddin', fient haed wad ye hae gotten frae me.—Noo, had yere tongue, and dinna

deive me wi' thanks," almost pushing her into the parlour again; "and sin ye're gawn awa' the morn, I'll see nae mair o'ye enoo—so fare ye weel. But, Archie, ye maun come an' tak your breakfast wi' me. I hae muckle to say to you; but ye manna be sae hard upon my baps, as ye used to be," with a facetious grin to her mollified favourite, as they shook hands and parted.

"Well, how do you like Mrs. Macshake, Mary?" asked her uncle as they walked home.

"That is a cruel question, uncle," answered she with a smile." My gratitude and my taste are at such variance," displaying her splendid gift, "that I know not how to reconcile them."

"That is always the case with those whom Mrs. Macshake has obliged," returned Mr. Douglas: "She does many liberal things, but in so ungracious a manner, that people are never sure whether they are obliged or

insulted by her. But the way in which she receives kindness is still worse. Could any thing equal her impertinence about my roebuck ?—Faith, I've a good mind never to enter her door again !"

Mary could scarcely preserve her gravity at her uncle's indignation, which seemed so disproportioned to the cause. But, to turn the current of his ideas, she remarked, that he had certainly been at pains to select two admirable specimens of her countrywomen for her.

"I don't think I shall soon forget either Mrs. Gawffaw or Mrs. Macshake," said she, laughing.

"I hope you won't carry away the impression, that these two *lusus naturæ* are specimens of Scotchwomen ?" said her uncle. "The former, indeed, is rather a sort of weed that infests every soil—the latter, to be sure, is an indigenous plant. I question if she would have arrived at such perfection in a more cultivated field, or genial

clime. She was born at a time when Scotland was very different from what it is now. Female education was little attended to, even in families of the highest rank; consequently, the ladies of those days possess a *raciness* in their manners and ideas that we should vainly seek for in this age of cultivation and refinement. Had your time permitted, you could have seen much good society here, superior, perhaps, to what is to be found any where else, as far as mental cultivation is concerned. But you will have leisure for that when you return."

Mary acquiesced with a sigh. *Return* was to her still a melancholy sounding word. It reminded her of all she had left—of the anguish of separation—the dreariness of absence; and all these painful feelings were renewed, in their utmost bitterness, when the time approached for her to bid adieu to her uncle. Lord Courtland's carriage, and two respectable looking ser-

vants, awaited her; and the following morning she commenced her journey, in all the agony of a heart that fondly clings to its native home.

ORE MAHA... S SARASWATI MAHAL. * THE

CHAPTER XII.

——— "Nor only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
Do minds grow up and flourish."

AKENSIDE.

AFTER parting with the last of her beloved relatives, Mary tried to think only of the happiness that awaited her in a re-union with her mother and sister; and she gave herself up to the blissful reveries of a young and ardent imagination. Mrs. Douglas had sought to repress, rather than excite, her sanguine expectations; but vainly is the

experience of others employed in moderating the enthusiasm of a glowing heart—Experience *cannot* be imparted: We may render the youthful mind prematurely cautious, or meanly suspicious; but the experience of a pure and enlightened mind is the result of observation, matured by time.

The journey, like most modern journies, was performed in comfort and safety; and, late one evening, Mary found herself at the goal of her wishes—at the threshold of the house that contained her mother! One idea filled her mind; but that idea called up a thousand emotions.

"I am now to meet my mother!" thought she; and, unconscious of every thing else, she was assisted from the carriage, and conducted into the house. A door was thrown open; but shrinking from the glare of light and sound of voices that assailed her, she stood dazzled and dismayed, till she beheld a figure approaching that she guess-

ed to be her mother. Her heart beat violently—a film was upon her eyes—she made an effort to reach her mother's arms, and sunk lifeless on her bosom!

Lady Juliana, for such it was, doubted not but that her daughter was really dead; for though she talked of fainting every hour of the day herself, still what is emphatically called a *dead-faint*, was a spectacle no less strange than shocking to her. She was, therefore, sufficiently alarmed and overcome to behave in a very interesting manner; and some yearnings of pity even possessed her heart, as she beheld her daughter's lifeless form extended before her—her beautiful, though inanimate features, half hid by the profusion of golden ringlets that fell around her. But these kindly feelings were of short duration; for no sooner was the nature of her daughter's insensibility ascertained, than all her former hostility returned, as she found every one's attention directed to Mary, and she herself

entirely overlooked in the general interest she had excited; and her displeasure was still further increased, as Mary, at length slowly unclosing her eyes, stretched out her hands, and faintly articulated, "My mother!"

"Mother! What a hideous vulgar appellation!" thought the fashionable parent to herself; and, instead of answering her daughter's appeal, she hastily proposed that she should be conveyed to her own apartment: then, summoning her maid, she consigned her to her care, slightly touching her cheek as she wished her good night, and returned to the card table. Adelaide too resumed her station at the harp, as if nothing had happened; but Lady Emily attended her cousin to her room—embraced her again and again, as she assured her she loved her already, she was so like her dear Edward: then, after satisfying herself that every thing was comfortable, affectionately kissed her, and withdrew.

Bodily fatigue got the better of mental agitation; and Mary slept soundly, and awoke refreshed.

"Can it be," thought she, as she tried to collect her bewildered thoughts, "can it be that I have really beheld my mother—that I have been pressed to her heart—that she has shed tears over me while I lay unconscious in her arms? Mother! What a delightful sound; and how beautiful she seemed! yet I have no distinct idea of her, my head was so confused; but I have a vague recollection of something very fair, and beautiful, and seraph-like, covered with silver drapery, and flowers, and with the sweetest voice in the world.—Yet that must be too young for my mother—Perhaps it was my sister; and my mother was too much overcome to meet her stranger child. Oh! how happy must I be with such a mother and sister!"

In these delightful cogitations, Mary remained till Lady Emily entered.

"How well you look this morning, my dear cousin," said she, flying to her; "you are much more like my Edward than you were last night. Ah! and you have got his smile too! You must let me see that very often."

"I am sure I shall have cause," said Mary, returning her cousin's affectionate embrace, "but at present I feel anxious about my mother and sister. The agitation of our meeting, and my weakness, I fear it has been too much for them;" and she looked earnestly in Lady Emily's face for a confirmation of her fears.

"Indeed, you need be under no uneasiness on their account," returned her cousin, with her usual bluntness, "their feelings are not so easily disturbed; you will see them both at breakfast, so come along."

The room was empty; and again Mary's sensitive heart trembled for the welfare of those already so dear to her; but Lady

Emily did not appear to understand the nature of her feelings.

"Have a little patience, my dear!" said she, with something of an impatient tone, as she rung for breakfast, "they will be here at their usual time. Nobody in this house is a slave to hours, or *gêné* with each other's society. Liberty is the motto here; every body breakfasts when and where they please. Lady Juliana, I believe, frequently takes her's in her dressing-room: Papa never is visible till two or three o'clock; and Adelaide is always late."

"What a selfish cold-hearted thing is grandeur!" thought Mary, as Lady Emily and she sat like two specks in the splendid saloon, surrounded by all that wealth could purchase, or luxury invent; and her thoughts reverted to the pious thanksgiving, and affectionate meeting that graced their social meal in the sweet sunny parlour at Lochmarlie.

Some of those airy nothings, without a local habitation, who are always to be found flitting about the mansions of the great, now lounged into the room; and soon after Adelaide made her *entrée*. Mary, trembling violently, was ready to fall upon her sister's neck; but Adelaide seemed prepared to repel every thing like a *scène*; for, with a cold, but sweet, "I hope you are better this morning?" she seated herself at the opposite side of the table. Mary's blood rushed back to her heart—her eyes filled with tears, she knew not why; for she could not analyse the feelings that swelled in her bosom. She would have shuddered to *think* her sister unkind, but she *felt* she was so.

"It can only be the difference of our manners," sighed she to herself; "I am sure my sister loves me, though she does not shew it in the same way I should have done;" and she gazed with the purest admiration and tenderness on the matchless beauty of her face and form. Never had

she beheld any thing so exquisitely beautiful; and she longed to throw herself into her sister's arms, and tell her how she loved her. But Adelaide seemed to think the present company wholly unworthy of her regard; for, after having received the adulation of the gentlemen, as they severally paid her a profusion of compliments upon her appearance, "Desire Tomkins," said she to a footman, "to ask Lady Juliana for the 'Morning Post,' and the second volume of 'Le ——,' of the French novel I am reading; and say she shall have it again when I have finished it."

"In what different terms people may express the same meaning," thought Mary; "had I been sending a message to my mother, I should have expressed myself quite differently; but no doubt my sister's meaning is the same, though she may not use the same words."

The servant returned with the newspa-

per, and the novel would be sent when it could be found.

"Lady Juliana never reads like any body else," said her daughter; "she is for ever mislaying books. She has lost the first volumes of the two last novels that came from town, before I had even seen them."

This was uttered in the softest, sweetest tone imaginable, and as if she had been pronouncing a panegyric.

Mary was more and more puzzled.

"What can be my sister's meaning here?" thought she; "the words seem almost to imply censure; but that voice and smile speak the sweetest praise. How truly Mrs. Douglas warned me never to judge of people by their words."

At that moment the door opened, and three or four dogs rushed in, followed by Lady Juliana, with a volume of a novel in her hand. Again Mary found herself assailed by a variety of powerful emotions—

she attempted to rise; but, pale and breathless, she sunk back in her chair.

Her agitation was unmarked by her mother, who did not even appear to be sensible of her presence; for, with a graceful bend of her head to the company in general, she approached Adelaide, and putting her lips to her forehead, "How do you do, love. I'm afraid you are very angry with me, about that teazing La ——. I can't conceive where it can be; but here is the third volume, which is much prettier than the second."

"I certainly shall not read the third volume before the second," said Adelaide with her usual serenity.

"Then I shall order another copy from town, my love; or I daresay I could tell you the story of the second volume: it is not at all interesting, I assure you. Hermilisde, you know—but I forget where the first volume left off."— Then directing her eyes to Mary, who had summoned strength

to rise, and was slowly venturing to approach her, she extended a finger towards her. Mary eagerly seized her mother's hand, and pressed it with fervour to her lips; then hid her face on her shoulder to conceal the tears that burst from her eyes.

"Absurd, my dear!" said her ladyship in a peevish tone, as she disengaged herself from her daughter; "you must really get the better of this foolish weakness; these *scènes* are too much for me. I was most excessively shocked last night, I assure you, and you ought not to have quitted your room to-day."

Poor Mary's tears congealed in her eyes at this tender salutation; and she raised her head, as if to ascertain whether it really proceeded from her mother; but instead of the angelic vision she had pictured to herself, she beheld a face which, though once handsome, now conveyed no pleasurable feeling to the heart.

Late hours, bad temper, and rouge, had done much to impair Lady Juliana's beauty. There still remained enough to dazzle a superficial observer; but not to satisfy the eye used to the expression of all the best affections of the soul. Mary almost shrank from the peevish inanity pourtrayed on her mother's visage, as a glance of the mind contrasted it with the mild eloquence of Mrs. Douglas' countenance; and, abashed and disappointed, she remained mournfully silent.

"Where is Dr. Redgill?" demanded Lady Juliana of the company in general.

"He has got scent of a turtle at Admiral Yellowchops," answered Mr. P.

"How vastly provoking," rejoined her ladyship, "that he should be out of the way the only time I have wished to see him since he came to the house!"

"Who is this favoured individual, whose absence you are so pathetically lamenting,

Julia?" asked Lord Courtland, as he indolently sauntered into the room.

"That disagreeable Dr. Redgill. He has gone somewhere to eat turtle, at the very time I wished to consult him about—"

"The propriety of introducing a new niece to your Lordship," said Lady Emily, as, with affected solemnity, she introduced Mary to her uncle. Lady Juliana frowned—the Earl smiled—saluted his niece—hoped she had recovered the fatigue of the journey—remarked it was very cold; and then turned to a parrot, humming "Pretty Poll say," &c.

Such was Mary's first introduction to her family; and those only who have felt what it was to have the genial current of their souls chilled by neglect, or changed by unkindness, can sympathise in the feelings of wounded affection—when the overflowings of a generous heart are confined within the narrow limits of its own bosom,

and the offerings of love are rudely rejected by the hand most dear to us.

Mary was too much intimidated by her mother's manner towards her, to give way, in her presence, to the emotions that agitated her; but she followed her sister's steps as she quitted the room, and, throwing her arms around her, sobbed in a voice almost choked with the excess of her feelings, "My sister, love me!—oh! love me!" But Adelaide's heart, seared by selfishness and vanity, was incapable of loving any thing in which self had no share; and, for the first time in her life, she felt awkward and embarrassed. Her sister's streaming eyes and supplicating voice spoke a language to which she was a stranger; for art is ever averse to recognise the accents of nature. Still less is it capable of replying to them; and Adelaide could only wonder at her sister's agitation, and think how unpleasant it was; and say something

about overcome, and *eau-de-luce*, and composure; which was all lost upon Mary as she hung upon her neck, every feeling wrought to its highest tone by the complicated nature of those emotions which swelled her heart. At length, making an effort to regain her composure, "Forgive me, my sister!" said she. "This is very foolish —to weep when I ought to rejoice—and I do rejoice—and I know I shall be so happy yet!" but in spite of the faint smile that accompanied her words, tears again burst from her eyes.

"I am sure I shall have infinite pleasure in your society," replied Adelaide, with her usual sweetness and placidity, as she replaced a ringlet in its proper position; "but I have unluckily an engagement at this time. You will, however, be at no loss for amusement; you will find musical instruments there," pointing to an adjacent apartment; "and here are new publications, and *porte feuilles* of drawings you

will perhaps like to look over;" and so saying, she disappeared.

"Musical instruments and new publications!" repeated Mary mechanically to herself: "what have I to do with them?—Oh! for one kind one word from my mother's lips!—one kind glance from my sister's eye!"

And she remained overwhelmed with the weight of those emotions, which, instead of pouring into the hearts of others, she was compelled to concentrate in her own. Her mournful reveries were interrupted by her kind friend Lady Emily; but Mary deemed her sorrow too sacred to be betrayed even to her, and therefore rallying her spirits, she strove to enter into those schemes of amusement suggested by her cousin for passing the day. But she found herself unable for such continued exertion; and hearing a large party was expected to dinner, she retired, in spite of Lady Emily's remonstrance, to her own apartment, where

she sought a refuge from her thoughts, in writing to her friends at Glenfern.

Lady Juliana looked in upon her as she passed to dinner. She was in a better humour, for she had received a new dress which was particularly becoming, as both her maid and her glass had attested.

Again Mary's heart bounded towards the being to whom she owed her birth; yet afraid to give utterance to her feelings, she could only regard her with silent admiration, till a moment's consideration converted that into a less pleasing feeling, as she observed for the first time, that her mother wore no mourning.

Lady Juliana saw her astonishment, and, little guessing the cause, was flattered by it. "Your style of dress is very obsolete, my dear," said she, as she contrasted the effect of her own figure and her daughter's in a large mirror; "and there's no occasion for you to wear black here. I shall desire my woman to order some things for

you; though perhaps there won't be much occasion, as your stay here is to be short; and, of course, you won't think of going out at all. *Apropos*, you will find it dull here by yourself, won't you? I shall leave you my darling Blanche for a companion," kissing a little French lap-dog, as she laid it in Mary's lap; "only you must be very careful of her, and coax her, and be very, very good to her; for I would not have my sweetest Blanche vexed, not for the world!" And, with another long and tender salute to her dog, and a "Good bye, my dear!" to her daughter, she quitted her to display her charms to a brilliant drawing-room, leaving Mary to solace herself in her solitary chamber with the whines of a discontented lap-dog.

CHAPTER XIII.

"C'est un personnage illustre dans son genre, et qui a porté le talent de se bien nourrir jusques où il pouvoit aller; ——— il ne semble né que pour la digestion."

LA BRUYERE.

IN every season of life, grief brings its own peculiar antidote along with it. The buoyancy of youth soon repels its deadening weight—the firmness of manhood resists its weakening influence—the torpor of old age is insensible to its most acute pangs.

In spite of the disappointment she had experienced the preceding day, Mary arose

the following morning with fresh hopes of happiness springing in her heart.

"What a fool I was," thought she, "to view so seriously what, after all, must be merely difference of manner; and how illiberal to expect every one's manners should accord exactly with my ideas; [illegible] ow that I have got over the first impression, I dare say I shall find every body quite amiable and delightful!"

And Mary quickly reasoned herself into the belief, that she only could have been to blame. With renovated spirits she therefore joined her cousin, and accompanied her to the breakfasting saloon. The visitors had all departed, but Dr. Redgill had returned, and seemed to be at the winding up of a solitary but voluminous meal. He was a very tall corpulent man, with a projecting front, large purple nose, and a profusion of chin.

"Good morning, ladies," mumbled he with a full mouth, as he made a feint of

half-rising from his chair. "Lady Emily, your servant—Miss Douglas, I presume—hem! allow me to pull the bell for your Ladyship," as he sat without stirring hand or foot; then after it was done—" 'pon my honour, Lady Emily, this is not using me well. Why did you not desire me?—and you are so nimble—I defy any man to get the start of you."

"I know you have been upon hard service, Doctor, and therefore I humanely wished to spare you any additional fatigue," replied Lady Emily.

"Fatigue, phoo! I'm sure I mind fatigue as little as any man; besides it's really nothing to speak of. I have merely rode from my friend Admiral Yellowchops' this morning."

"I hope you passed a pleasant day there yesterday?"

"So, so—very so, so," returned the Doctor drily.

"Only so, so, and a turtle in the case!" exclaimed Lady Emily.

"Phoo!—as to that, the turtle was neither here nor there. I value turtle as little as any man. You may be sure it wasn't for that I went to see my old friend Yellowchops. It happened, indeed, that there *was* a turtle, and a very well dressed one too; but where five and thirty people (one half of them ladies, who, of course, are always helped first,) sit down to dinner, there's an end of all rational happiness in my opinion."

"But at a turtle feast you have surely something much better. You know you may have rational happiness any day over a beef-steak."

"I beg your pardon—that's not such an easy matter. I can assure you it is a work of no small skill to dress a beef-steak handsomely; and, moreover, to eat it in perfection, a man must eat it by himself. If

once you come to exchange words over it, it is useless. I once saw the finest steak I ever clapt my eyes upon, completely ruined by one silly scoundrel asking another if he liked fat. If he liked fat!—what a question for one rational being to ask another! The fact is, a beef-steak is like a woman's reputation, if once it is breathed upon it's good for nothing!"

"One of the stories with which my nurse used to amuse my childhood," said Mary, "was that of having seen an itinerant conjurer dress a beaf-steak on his tongue."

The Doctor suspended the morsel he was carrying to his mouth, and for the first time regarded Mary with looks of unfeigned admiration.

"'Pon my honour, and that was as clever a trick as ever I heard of! You are a wonderful people, you Scotch—a very wonderful people—but, pray, was she at any pains to examine the fellow's tongue?"

"I imagine not," said Mary; "I suppose the love of science was not strong enough to make her run the risk of burning her fingers."

"It's a thousand pities," said the Doctor, as he dropped his chin with an air of disappointment. "I am surprised none of your Scotch *sçavans* got hold of the fellow, and squeezed the secret out of him. It might have proved an important discovery—a very important discovery;—and your Scotch are not apt to let any thing escape them—a very searching shrewd people as ever I knew—and that's the only way to arrive at knowledge. A man must be of a stirring mind, if he expects to do good."

"A poor woman below wishes to see you, Sir," said a servant.

"These poor women are perfect pests to society," said the Doctor, as his nose assumed a still darker hue; "there is no resting upon one's seat for them—always

something the matter! They burn, and bruise, and hack themselves, and their brats, one would really think, on purpose to give trouble."

"I have not the least doubt of it," said Lady Emily; "they must find your sympathy so soothing."

"As to that, Lady Emily, if you knew as much about poor women as I do, you wouldn't think so much of them as you do. Take my word for it—they are one and all of them a very greedy ungrateful set, and require to be kept at a distance."

"And also to be kept waiting. As poor people's time is their only wealth, I observe you generally make them pay a pretty large fee in that way."

"That is really not what I would have expected from you, Lady Emily. I must take the liberty to say, your Ladyship does me the greatest injustice. You must be sensible how ready I am to fly," rising as if he had been glued to his chair, "when

there is any real danger. I'm sure it was only last week I got up as soon as I had swallowed my dinner, to see a man who had fallen down in a fit; and now I am going to this woman, who, I dare say, has nothing the matter with her, before my breakfast is well down my throat."

"Who is that gentleman?" asked Mary, as the Doctor at length, with much reluctance, shuffled out of the room.

"He is a sort of medical aid-de-camp of papa's," answered Lady Emily; "who, for the sake of good living, has got himself completely domesticated here. He is vulgar, selfish, and *gourmand*, as you must already have discovered; but these are accounted his greatest perfections, as papa, like all indolent people, must be diverted—and *that* he never is by genteel sensible people. He requires something more *piquant*, and nothing fatigues him so much as the conversation of a common-place sensible man—one who has the skill to keep his foibles

ut of sight. Now, what delights him in Dr. Redgill, there is no *retenu*—any child who runs may read his character at a glance."

"It certainly does not require much penetration," said Mary, "to discover the Doctor's master passion; love of ease, and self-indulgence, seem to be the predominant features of his mind; and he looks as if, when he sat in an arm-chair, with his toes on the fender, and his hands crossed, he would not have an idea beyond "I wonder what we shall have for dinner to-day."

"I'm glad to hear you say so, Miss Douglas," said the Doctor, catching the last words as he entered the room, and taking them to be the spontaneous effusions of the speaker's own heart; "I rejoice to hear you say so. Suppose we send for the bill of fare,"—pulling the bell; and then to the servant, who answered the summons, "Desire Grillade to send up his bill—Miss Douglas wishes to see it."

"Young ladies are much more housewifely in Scotland than they are in this country," continued the Doctor, seating himself as close as possible to Mary,—"at least they were when I knew Scotland; but that's not yesterday, and it's much changed since then, I dare say. I studied physic in Edinburgh, and went upon a *tower* through the Highlands. I was very much pleased with what I saw, I assure you. Fine country in some respects—nature has been very liberal."

Mary's heart leapt within her at hearing her dear native land praised even by Dr. Redgill, and her conscience smote her for the harsh and hasty censure she had passed upon him. "One who can admire the scenery of the Highlands," thought she, "must have a mind. It has always been observed, that only persons of taste were capable of appreciating the peculiar charms of mountain scenery. A London citizen, or a Lincolnshire grazier, sees nothing but de-

deformity in the sublime works of nature," *ergo*, reasoned Mary, " Dr. Redgill must be of a more elevated way of thinking than I had supposed. The entrance of Lady Juliana prevented her expressing the feelings that were upon her lips; but she thought what pleasure she would have in resuming the delightful theme at another opportunity.

After slightly noticing her daughter, and carefully adjusting her favourites, Lady Juliana began :—

" I am anxious to consult you, Dr. Redgill, upon the state of this young person's health.—You have been excessively ill, my dear, Have you not? (My sweetest Blanche, do be quiet!) You had a cough I think, and every thing that was bad.—And as her friends in Scotland have sent her to me for a short time, entirely on account of her health, (My charming Frisk, your spirits are really too much!) I think it quite proper that she should be confined to her

own apartment during the winter, that she may get quite well and strong against spring. As to visiting, or going into company, that of course must be quite out of the question. You can tell Dr. Redgill, my dear, all about your complaints yourself."

Mary tried to articulate, but her feelings rose almost to suffocation, and the words died upon her lips.

"Your ladyship confounds me," said the Doctor, pulling out his spectacles, which, after duly wiping, he adjusted on his nose, and turned their beams full on Mary's face—"I really never should have guessed there was any thing the matter with the young lady.—She does look a *leettle* delicate, to be sure—changing colour, too—but hand cool—eye clear—pulse steady, a *leettle* impetuous, but that's nothing, and the appetite good. I own I was surprised to see you cut so good a figure after the delicious meals you have been accustomed to in the north: you must find it mi-

serable picking here. An English breakfast," glancing with contempt at the eggs, muffins, toast, preserves, &c. &c. he had collected round him, "is really a most insipid meal—if I did not make a rule of rising early and taking regular exercise, I doubt very much if I should be able to swallow a mouthful—there's nothing to whet the appetite here; and it's the same every where; as Yellowchops says, our breakfasts are a disgrace to England. One would think the whole nation was upon a regimen of tea and toast—from the Land's End to Berwick-upon-Tweed, nothing but tea and toast—Your Ladyship must really acknowledge the prodigious advantage the Scotch possess over us in that respect."

"I thought the breakfasts like every thing else in Scotland, extremely disgusting," replied her Ladyship, with indignation.

"Ha! well, that really amazes me.—The people I give up—they are dirty and greedy

—the country, too, is a perfect mass of rubbish—and the dinners not fit for dogs—the cookery, I mean; as to the materials, they are admirable—But the breakfasts! that's what redeems the land—and every country has its own peculiar excellence. In Argyleshire you have the Lochfine herring, fat, luscious, and delicious, just out of the water, falling to pieces with its own richness—melting away like butter in your mouth. In Aberdeenshire, you have the Finnan haddo' with a flavour all its own, vastly relishing—just salt enough to be *piquant*, without parching you up with thirst. In Perthshire, there is the Tay salmon, kippered, crisp and juicy—a very magnificent morsel—a *leettle* heavy, but that's easily counteracted by a tea-spoonful of the Athole whisky. In other places, you have the exquisite mutton of the country made into hams of a most delicate flavour; flour scones, soft and white; oat-cake, thin and crisp; marmalade and jams of every descrip-

tion; and—But I beg pardon—your Ladyship was upon the subject of this young lady's health.—'Pon my honour! I can see little the matter—We were just going to look over the bill together when your Ladyship entered. I see it begins with that eternal *soupe santé*, and that paltry *potage-au-riz*—this is the second day within a week Monsieur Grillade has thought fit to treat us with them; and it's a fortnight yesterday since I have seen either oyster or turtle soup upon the table. 'Pon my honour! such inattention is infamous. I know Lord Courtland detests *soup santé*, or, what's the same thing, he's quite indifferent to it—for I take indifference and dislike to be much the same: a man's indifference to his dinner is a serious thing, and so I shall let Monsieur Grillade know."—And the Doctor's chin rose and fell like the waves of the sea.

"What is the name of the physician at Bristol, who is so celebrated for consumptive complaints?" asked Lady Juliana of

Adelaide. "I shall send for him; he is the only person, I have any reliance upon. I know he always recommends confinement for consumption."

Tears dropped from Mary's eyes. Lady Juliana regarded her with surprise and severity.

"How very tiresome! I really can't stand these perpetual *scènes*. Adelaide, my love, pull the bell for my *eau de luce*. Dr. Redgill, place the screen there. This room is insufferably hot. My dogs will literally be roasted alive;" and her Ladyship fretted about in all the perturbation of ill humour.

"Pon my honour! I don't think the room hot," said the Doctor, who, from a certain want of tact and opacity of intellect, never comprehended the feelings of others: "I declare I have felt it much hotter, when your Ladyship has complained of the cold: but there's no accounting for people's feel-

ings. If you would move your seat a *leettle* this way, I think you would be cooler; and as to your daughter——"

"I have repeatedly desired, Dr. Redgill, that you will not use these familiar appellations when you address me or any of my family," interrupted Lady Juliana with haughty indignation.

"I beg pardon," said the Doctor, nowise discomposed at this rebuff.—"Well, with regard to Miss—Miss—this young lady, I assure your Ladyship, you need be under no apprehensions on her account. She's a a *leettle* nervous, that's all—take her about by all means—all young ladies love to go about and see sights. Shew her the pump-room, and the ball-room, and the shops, and the rope-dancers, and the wild beasts, and there's no fear of her. I never recommend confinement to man, woman, or child. It destroys the appetite—and our appetite is the best part of us—What would we be without appetites? Miserable beings! worse

than the beasts of the field!"—And away shuffled the Doctor to admonish Monsieur Grillade on the iniquity of neglecting this the noblest attribute of man.

"It appears to me excessively extraordinary," said Lady Juliana, addressing Mary, "that Mrs. Douglas should have alarmed me so much about your health, when, it seems, there's nothing the matter with you. She certainly shewed very little regard for my feelings. I can't understand it; and I must say, if you are not ill, I have been most excessively ill used by your Scotch friends." And, with an air of great indignation, her Ladyship swept out of the room, regardless of the state into which she had thrown her daughter.

Poor Mary's feelings were now at their climax, and she gave way to all the repressed agony that swelled her heart. Lady Emily, who had been amusing herself at the other end of the saloon, and had heard nothing of what had passed, flew towards

her at sight of her suffering, and eagerly demanded of Adelaide the cause.

"I really don't know," answered Adelaide, lifting her beautiful eyes from her book, with the greatest composure, "Lady Juliana is always cross of a morning."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Mary, trying to regain her composure, "the fault is mine. I—I have offended my mother, I know not how. Tell me—O tell me, how I can obtain her forgiveness?"

"Obtain her forgiveness!" repeated Lady Emily indignantly, "for what?"

"Alas! I know not; but in some way I have displeased my mother: her looks—her words—her manner—all tell me how dissatisfied she is with me; while to my sister, and even to her very dogs—" Here Mary's agitation choked her utterance.

"If you expect to be treated like a dog, you will certainly be disappointed," said Lady Emily. "I wonder Mrs. Douglas did not warn you of what you had to ex-

pect. She must have known something of Lady Juliana's ways; and it would have been as well had you been better prepared to encounter them."

Mary looked hurt, and making an effort to conquer her emotion, she said, "Mrs. Douglas never spoke of my mother with disrespect; but she did warn me against expecting too much from her affection. She said I had been too long estranged from her, to have retained my place in her heart; but still—"

"You could not foresee the reception you have met with?—Nor I neither. Did you Adelaide?"

"Lady Juliana is sometimes so odd," answered her daughter, in her sweetest tone, "that I really am seldom surprised at any thing she does; but all this fracas appears to me perfectly absurd, as nobody minds any thing she says."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mary; "my duty must ever be to reverence my mother.

My study should be to please her, if I only knew how; and oh! would she but suffer me to love her!"

Adelaide regarded her sister for a moment with a look of surprise; then rose and left the room, humming an Italian air.

Lady Emily remained with her cousin; but she was a bad comforter: her indignation against the oppressor was always much stronger than her sympathy with the oppressed; and she would have been more in her element scolding the mother than soothing the daughter.

But Mary had not been taught to trust to mortals weak as herself for support in the hour of trial: She knew her aid must come from a higher source; and in solitude she sought for consolation.

"This must be all for my good," sighed she, "else it would not be. I had drawn too bright a picture of happiness—already it is blotted out with my tears. I must set

about replacing it with one of soberer colours."

Alas! Mary knew not how many a fair picture of human felicity had shared the same fate as hers!

CHAPTER XIV.

> "They were in sooth a most enchanting train;
> ——————— skilful to unite
> With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain."
>
> *Castle of Indolence.*

In writing to her maternal friend, Mary did not follow the mode usually adopted by young ladies of the heroic cast, viz. that of giving a minute and circumstantial detail of their own complete wretchedness; and abusing, in terms highly sentimental, every member of the family with whom they are associated. Mary knew, that to breathe a hint of her own unhappiness would

be to embitter the peace of those she loved; and she therefore strove to conceal from their observation the disappointment she had experienced. Many a sigh was heaved, however, and many a tear was wiped away ere a letter could be composed that would carry pleasure to the dear group at Glenfern. She could say nothing of her mother's tenderness, or her sister's affection; but she dwelt upon the elegance of the one, and the beauty of the other. She could not boast of the warmth of her uncle's reception, but she praised his good humour, and enlarged upon Lady Emily's kindness and attention. Even Dr. Redgill's admiration of Scotch breakfasts, was given as a *bonne bouche* for her good old aunts.

"I declare," said Miss Grizzy, as she ended her fifth perusal of the letter, "Mary must be a happy creature, every body must allow; indeed I never heard it disputed that Lady Juliana is a most elegant being; and I daresay she is greatly improved since

we saw her, for you know that is a long time ago."

"The mind may improve after a certain age," replied Jacky, with one of her wisest looks, "but I doubt very much if the person does."

"If the inside had been like the out, there would have been no need for improvement," observed Nicky.

"I'm sure you are both perfectly right," resumed the sapient Grizzy, "and I have not the least doubt but that our dear niece is a great deal wiser than when we knew her; nobody can deny but she is a great deal older; and you know people always grow wiser as they grow older of course."

"They *ought* to do it," said Jacky with emphasis.

"But there's no fool like an old fool," quoth Nicky.

"What a delightful creature our charming niece Adelaide must be, from Mary's account," said Grizzy; "only I can't con-

ceive how her eyes come to be black. I'm sure there's not a black eye amongst us. The Kilnacroish family are black to be sure; and Kilnacroish's great-grandmother was first cousin, once removed, to our grandfather's aunt, by the mother's side: it's wonderful the length that resemblances run in some old families; and I really can't account for our niece Adelaide's black eyes naturally, any other way than just through the Kilnacroish family; for I'm quite convinced it's from us she takes them, children always take their eyes from their father's side; every body knows that Becky's, and Bella's, and Babby's, are all as like their poor father's as they can stare."

"There's no accounting for the varieties of the human species," said Jacky.

"And like's an ill mark," observed Nicky.

"And only think of her being so much taller than Mary, and twins! I declare it's wonderful—I should have thought, indeed I never doubted, that they would have

been exactly the same size—And such a beautiful colour too, when we used to think Mary rather pale—it's very unaccountable!"

"You forget," said Jacky, who had not forgot the insult offered to her nursing system eighteen years before; "you forget that I always predicted what would happen."

"I never knew any good come of changes," said Nicky.

"I'm sure that's very true," rejoined Grizzy; "and we have great reason to thank our stars, that Mary is not a perfect dwarf; which I really thought she would have been for long, till she took a shooting,—summer was a year."

"But she'll shoot no more," said Jacky, with a shake of the head that might have vied with Jove's imperial nod; "England's not the place for shooting."

"The English women are all poor droichs," said Nicky, who had seen three in the course of her life.

"It's a great matter to us all however, and to herself too, poor thing! that Mary should be so happy," resumed Grizzy. "I'm sure I don't know what she would have done, if Lord Courtland had been an ill-tempered harsh man, which, you know, he might just as easily have been; and it would really have been very hard upon poor Mary—and Lady Emily such a sweet creature too! I'm sure we must all allow we have the greatest reason to be thankful."

"I don't know," said Jacky; "Mary was petted enough before, I wish she may have a head to stand any more."

"She'll be ten times nicer than ever," quoth Nicky.

"There is some reason, to be sure, that can't be denied, to be afraid of that; at the same time, Mary has a great deal of sense of her own when she chooses; and it's a great matter for her, and indeed for all of us, that she is under the eye of such a sensible worthy man, as that Dr. Redgill. Of

course, we may be sure, Lord Courtland will keep a most elegant table, and have a great variety of sweet things, which are certainly very tempting for young people; but I have no doubt but Dr. Redgill will look after Mary, and see that she does'nt eat too many of them."

"Dr. Redgill must be a very superior man," pronounced Jacky, in her most magisterial manner.

"If I could hear of a private opportunity," exclaimed Nicky, in a transport of generosity, "I would send him one of our hams, and a nice little pig * of butter—the English are all great people for butter."

The proposal was hailed with rapture by both sisters in a breath; and it was finally settled, that to those tender pledges of Nicky's, Grizzy should add a box of Lady Maclaughlan's latest invented pills, while Miss Jacky was to compose the epistle that was to accompany them.

* Jar.

The younger set of aunts were astonished that Mary had said nothing about lovers and offers of marriage, as they had always considered going to England as synonimous with going to be married.

To Mrs. Douglas' more discerning eye, Mary's happiness did not appear in so dazzling a light, as to the weaker optics of her aunts.

"It is not like my Mary," thought she, "to rest so much on mere external advantages; surely her warm affectionate heart cannot be satisfied with the *grace* of a mother, and the *beauty* of a sister: these she might admire in a stranger; but where we seek for happiness, we better prize more homely attributes. Yet Mary is so open and confiding, I think she could not have concealed from me, had she experienced a disappointment."

Mrs. Douglas was not aware of the effect of her own practical lessons; and that, while she was almost unconsciously prac-

tising the quiet virtues of patience, and fortitude, and self-denial, and unostentatiously sacrificing her own wishes, to promote the comfort of others—her example, like a kindly dew, was shedding its silent influence on the embryo blossoms of her pupil's heart.

CHAPTER XV.

——"So the devil prevails often; *opponit nubem*, he claps a cloud between; some little objection; a stranger is come; or my head aches; or the church is too cold; or I have letters to write; or I am not disposed; or it is not yet time; or the time is past: these, and such as these, are the clouds the devil claps between heaven and us; but these are such impotent objections, that they were as soon confuted, as pretended, by all men that are not fools or professed enemies of religion."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

LADY Juliana had, in vain, endeavoured to obtain a sick certificate for her daughter, that would have authorised her consigning her to the oblivion of her own apartment. The physicians, whom she consulted, all agreed, for once, in recommending a totally different system to be pursued; and her displeasure, in consequence,

was violently excited against the medical tribe in general, and Dr. Redgill in particular. For that worthy, she had, indeed, always entertained a most thorough contempt and aversion; for he was poor, ugly, and vulgar, and these were the three most deadly sins in her calendar. The object of her detestation was, however, completely insensible to its effects. The Doctor, like Achilles, was vulnerable but in one part, and over that she could exercise no controul. She had nothing to do with the *menage*—possessed no influence over Lord Courtland, nor authority over Monsieur Grillade. She differed from himself as to the dressing of certain dishes; and, in short, he summed up her character in one emphatic sentence, that, in his idea, conveyed severer censure than all that Pope or Young ever wrote—"I don't think she has the taste of her mouth!"

Thus thwarted in her scheme, Lady Juliana's dislike to her daughter rather in-

creased than diminished: and it was well for Mary, that lessons of forbearance had been early infused into her mind; for her spirit was naturally high, and would have revolted from the tyranny and injustice with which she was treated, had she not been taught the practical duties of Christianity, and that "patience, with all its appendages, is the sum-total of all our duty that is proper to the day of sorrow."

Not that Mary sought, by a blind compliance with all her mother's follies and caprices, to ingratiate herself into her favour—even the motive she would have deemed insufficient to have sanctified the deed. And the only arts she employed to win a place in her parent's heart, were ready obedience, unvarying sweetness, and uncomplaining submission.

Although Mary possessed none of the sour bigotry of a narrow mind, she was yet punctual in the discharge of her religious duties; and the Sunday following her ar-

rival, as they sat at breakfast, she inquired of her cousin, at what time the church-service began.

"I really am not certain—I believe it is late," replied her cousin carelessly. "But why do you ask?"

"Because I wish to be there in proper time."

"But we scarcely ever go—never, indeed, to the parish church—and we are rather distant from any other; so you must say your prayers at home."

"I would certainly prefer going to church," said Mary.

"Going to church!" exclaimed Dr. Redgill, in amazement. "I wonder what makes people so keen of going to church! I'm sure there's little good to be got there. For my part, I declare I would just as soon think of going into my grave. Take my word for it, churches and church-yards are rather too nearly related."

"In such a day as this," said Mary, "so

dry and sunny, I am sure there can be no danger."

"Take your own way, Miss Mary," said the Doctor; "but I think it my duty to let you know my opinion of churches. I look upon them as extremely prejudicial to the health. They are invariably, either too hot or too cold; you are either stewed or starved in them; and, till some improvement takes place, I assure you my foot shall never enter one of them. In fact, they are perfect receptacles of human infirmities. I can tell one of your church-going ladies at a glance: they have all rheumatisms in their shoulders, and colds in their heads, and swelled faces. Besides, it's a poor country church—there's nothing to be seen after you do go."

"I assure you, Lady Juliana will be excessively annoyed if you go," said Lady Emily, as Mary rose to leave the room.

"Surely my mother cannot be displeased at my attending church!" said Mary, in astonishment.

"Yes, she can, and most certainly will. She never goes herself now, since she had a quarrel with Dr. Barlow, the clergyman; and she can't bear any of the family to attend him."

"And you have my sanction for staying away, Miss Mary," added the Doctor.

"Is he a man of bad character?" asked Mary, as she stood irresolute whether to proceed.

"Quite the reverse. He is a very good man; but he was scandalized at Lady Juliana's bringing her dogs to church one day, and wrote her what she conceived a most insolent letter about it.—But here comes your lady-mamma, and the culprits in question."

"Your Ladyship is just come in time to settle a dispute here," said the Doctor, anxious to turn her attention from a hot muffin, which had just been brought in, and which he meditated appropriating to himself: "I have said all I can—(Was you looking at the toast, Lady Emily?)—I must now leave

it to your Ladyship to convince this young lady of the folly of going to church."

The Doctor gained his point. The muffin was upon his own plate, while Lady Juliana directed her angry look towards her daughter.

"Who talks of going to church?" demanded she.

Mary gently expressed her wish to be permitted to attend divine service.

"I won't permit it. I don't approve of girls going about by themselves. It is vastly improper, and I won't hear of it."

"It is the only place I shall ask to go to," said Mary, timidly; "but I have always been accustomed to attend church, and—"

"That is a sufficient reason for my choosing that you should not attend it here. I won't suffer a Methodist in the house."

"I assure you, the Methodists are gaining ground very fast," said the Doctor, with his mouth full. "'Pon my soul, I think it's very alarming!"

"Pray, what is so alarming in the apprehension?" asked Lady Emily.

"What is so alarming! 'Pon my honour, Lady Emily, I'm astonished to hear you ask such a question!"—muttering to himself, "zealots—fanatics—enthusiasts—bedlamites! I'm sure every body knows what Methodists are!"

"There has been quite enough said upon the subject," said Lady Juliana.

"There are plenty of sermons in the house, Miss Mary," continued the Doctor, who, like many other people, thought he was always doing a meritorious action when he could dissuade any body from going to church. "I saw a volume somewhere not long ago; and, at any rate, there's the Spectator, if you want Sunday's reading—some of the papers there are as good as any sermon you'll get from Dr. Barlow."

Mary, with fear and hesitation, made another attempt to overcome her mother's prejudice; but in vain.

"I desire I may hear no more about it!"

cried she, raising her voice. "The clergyman is a most improper person. I won't suffer any of my family to attend his church; and therefore, once for all, I won't hear another syllable on the subject."

This was said in a tone and manner not to be disputed, and Mary felt her resolution give way before the displeasure of her mother. A contest of duties was new to her, and she could not all at once resolve upon fulfilling one duty at the expense of another. "Besides," thought she, "my mother thinks she is in the right. Perhaps, by degrees, I may bring her to think otherwise; and it is surely safer to try to conciliate than to determine to oppose."

But another Sabbath came, and Mary found she had made no progress in obtaining the desired permission. She therefore began seriously to commune with her own heart, as to the course she ought to pursue. The commandment of "Honour thy father and thy mother," had been deeply imprinted on her mind, and few possessed higher notions of filial reverence; but there

was another precept, which also came to her recollection. "Whosoever loveth father and mother more than me, cannot be my disciple." "But I may honour and obey my parent without loving her more than my Saviour," argued she with herself, in hopes of lulling her conscience by this reflection. "But again," thought she, "the Scripture saith, 'He that keepeth my commandments, he it is that loveth me." Then she felt the necessity of owning, that if she obeyed the commands of her mother, when in opposition to the will of her God, she gave one of the Scripture proofs of either loving or fearing her parent upon earth more than her father which is in heaven. But Mary, eager to reconcile impossibilities, viz. the will of an ungodly parent with the holy commands of her Maker, thought now of another argument to calm her conscience. "The Scripture," said she, "says nothing positive about attending public worship; and, as Lady Emily says, I may say my prayers just as well at home." But the passages of Scripture were too deeply im-

printed on her mind to admit of this subterfuge. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst of them," &c. &c.—But, alas! two or three never were gathered together at Beech Park, except upon parties of pleasure, games of hazard, or purposes of conviviality.

The result of Mary's deliberations was, a firm determination to do what she deemed her duty, however painful. And she went in search of Lady Emily, hoping to prevail upon her to use her influence with Lady Juliana to grant the desired permission; or should she fail in obtaining it, she trusted her resolution would continue strong enough to enable her to brave her mother's displeasure in this act of conscientious disobedience. She met her cousin, with her bonnet on, prepared to go out.

"Dear Lady Emily," said she, "let me entreat of you to use your influence with my mother, to persuade her to allow me to go to church."

"In the first place," answered her cousin; "you may know that I have no influence;—in the second, that Lady Juliana is never to be persuaded into any thing;—in the third, I really can't suppose you are serious in thinking it a matter of such vast moment, whether or not you go to church."

"Indeed I do," answered Mary, earnestly. "I have been taught to consider it as such; and—"

"Pshaw! nonsense! these are some of your stiff-necked Presbyterian notions. I shall really begin to suspect you are a Methodist; and yet you are not at all like one."

"Pray, tell me," said Mary, with a smile, "what are your ideas of a Methodist?"

"Oh! thank heaven, I know little about them!—almost as little as Dr. Redgill, who, I verily believe, could scarcely tell the difference betwixt a Catholic and a Methodist, except that the one dances, and t'other prays. But I am rather inclined to believe it is a sort of a scowling, black-browed, hard-favoured creature, with its greasy hair combed straight upon its flat forehead, and

that twirls its thumbs, and turns up its eyes, and speaks through its nose; and, in short, is every thing that you are not, except in this matter—of going to church. So, to avert all these evil signs from falling upon you, I shall make a point of your keeping company with me for the rest of the day."

Again Mary became serious, as she renewed her entreaties to her cousin to intercede with Lady Juliana, that she might be allowed to attend *any* church.

"Not for kingdoms!" exclaimed she. "Her Ladyship is in one of her most detestable humours to day; not that I should mind that, if it was any thing of real consequence that I had to compass for you. A ball, for instance—I should certainly stand by you there; but I am really not so fond of mischief as to enrage her for nothing!"

"Then I fear I must go to church without it," said Mary, in a melancholy tone.

"If you are to go at all, it must certainly be without it. And here is the carriage

—get your bonnet, and come along with me. You shall, at least, have a sight of the church."

Mary went to put on her pelisse; and, descending to join her cousin in the drawing-room, she found her engaged in an argument with Dr. Redgill. How it had commenced, did not appear; but the Doctor's voice was raised as if to bring it to a decided termination.

"The French, Madam, in spite of your prejudices, are a very superior nation to us. Their skill and knowledge are both infinitely higher. Every man in France is a first rate cook—in fact they are a nation of cooks; and one of our late travellers assures us, that they have discovered three hundred methods of dressing eggs, for one thing."

"That is just two hundred and ninety-nine ways more than enough," said Lady Emily; "give me a plain boiled egg, and I desire no other variety of the produce of a hen, till it takes the form of a chicken."

Dr. Redgill lowered his eye-brows, and drew up his chin, but disdained to waste more arguments upon so tasteless a being. "To talk sense to a woman is like feeding chickens upon turtle soup," thought he to himself.

As for Lady Juliana, she exulted in the wise and judicious manner in which she had exercised her authority, and felt her consequence greatly increased by a public display of it; power being an attribute she was very seldom invested with now. Indeed, to do her ladyship justice, she was most feelingly alive to the duty due to parents, though that such a commandment existed seemed quite unknown to her till she became a mother. But she made ample amends for former deficiencies now; as to hear her expatiate on the subject, one would have deemed it the only duty necessary to be practised, either by Christian or heathen, and that, like charity, it comprehended every virtue, and was a covering for every sin. But there are many

more sensible people than her ladyship, who entertain the same sentiments, and, by way of variety, reverse the time and place of their duties. When they are children, they make many judicious reflections on the duties of parents; when they become parents, they then acquire a wonderful insight into the duties of children. In the same manner, husbands and wives are completely alive to the duties incumbent upon each other; and the most ignorant servant is fully instructed in the duty of a master. But we shall leave Lady Juliana to pass over the duties of parents, and ponder upon those of children, while we follow Lady Emily and Mary in their airing.

The road lay by the side of a river; and though Mary's taste had been formed upon the wild romantic scenery of the Highlands, she yet looked with pleasure on the tamer beauties of an English landscape. And, though accustomed to admire even "rocks where the snow flake reposes;" she had also taste, though of a less enthusiastic kind, for

the "gay landscapes and gardens of roses," which, in this more genial clime, bloomed even under winter's sway. The carriage drove smoothly along, and the sound of the church bell fell at intervals on the ear, "in cadence sweet, now dying all away;" and, at the holy sound, Mary's heart flew back to the peaceful vale and primitive kirk of Lochmarlie, where all her happy Sabbaths had been spent. The view now opened upon the village church, beautifully situated on the slope of a green hill. Parties of straggling villagers, in their holiday suits, were descried in all directions, some already assembled in the church-yard, others traversing the neat foot-paths that led through the meadows. But, to Mary's eyes, the well dressed English rustic, trudging along the smooth path, was a far less picturesque object, than the bare-footed Highland girl, bounding over trackless heath-covered hills; and the well preserved glossy blue coat, seemed a poor substitute for the varied drapery of the graceful plaid.

So much do early associations tincture all our future ideas.

They had now reached the church, and as Mary adhered to her resolution of attending divine worship, Lady Emily declared her intention of accompanying her, that she might come in for her share of Lady Juliana's displeasure; but, in spite of her levity, the reverend aspect, and meek, yet fervent piety of Dr. Burley, impressed her with better feelings; and she joined in the service with outward decorum, if not with inward devotion. The music consisted of an organ, simply but well played; and to Mary, unaccustomed to any sacred sounds, save those twanged through the nose of a Highland *precentor*, it seemed the music of the spheres.

Far different sounds than those of peace and praise awaited her return. Lady Juliana, apprized of this open act of rebellion, was in all the paroxysms incident to a little mind, on discovering the impotence of its power. She rejected all attempts at re-

conciliation; raved about ingratitude and disobedience; declared her determination of sending Mary back to her vulgar Scotch relations one moment—the next protested she should never see those odious Methodists again—then she was to take her to France, and shut her up in a convent, &c. till after uttering all the incoherencies usual with ladies in a passion, she at last succeeded in raving herself into a fit of hysterics.

Poor Mary was deeply affected at this (to her) tremendous display of passion. She who had always been used to the mild placidity of Mrs. Douglas, and who had seen her face sometimes clouded with sorrow, but never deformed by anger—what a spectacle! to behold a parent subject to the degrading influence of an ungovernable temper! Her very soul sickened at the sight; and while she wept over her mother's weakness, she prayed that the power which stayed the ocean's wave would mercifully vouchsafe to still the wilder tempests of human passion.

CHAPTER XVI.

> "Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
> Which, with pain purchased, doth inherit pain."
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

In addition to her mother's implacable wrath and unceasing animadversion, Mary found she was looked upon as a sort of alarming character by the whole family. Lord Courtland seemed afraid of being drawn into a religious controversy every time he addressed her. Dr. Redgill retreated at her approach, and eyed her askance, as much as to say, "'Pon my honour, a young lady that can fly in her mother's face about such a trifle as going to church, is not very safe company." And Adelaide shunned her more than ever, as if afraid of

coming in contact with a professed Methodist. Lady Emily, however, remained staunch to her; and though she had her own private misgivings as to her cousin's creed, she yet stoutly defended her from the charge of Methodism, and maintained that, in many respects, Mary was no better than her neighbours.

"Well Mary," cried she, as she entered her room one day with an air of exultation, "here is an opportunity for you to redeem your character—There," throwing down a card, "is an invitation for you to a fancy ball."

Mary's heart bounded at the mention of a ball. She had never been at one, and it was pictured in her imagination in all the glowing colours with which youth and inexperience deck untried pleasures.

"O how charming!" exclaimed she, with sparkling eyes, "how my aunts Becky and Bella, will love to hear an account of a ball—And a fancy ball!—what is that?"

Lady Emily explained to her the nature of the entertainment, and Mary was in still greater raptures.

"It will be a perfect scene of enchantment, I have no doubt," continued her cousin, "for Lady M. understands giving balls, which is what every one does not; for there are dull balls as well as dull everythings else in the world. But come, I have left Lady Juliana and Adelaide in grand debate as to their dresses. We must also hold a cabinet council upon ours. Shall I summon the inimitable Slash to preside?"

The mention of her mother recalled Mary's thoughts from the festive scene to which they had already flown.

"But are you *quite* sure," said she, "that I shall have my mother's consent to go?"

"Quite the contrary," answered her cousin coolly: "She won't hear of your going. But what signifies that; you could go to church in spite of her, and surely you can't think her consent of much consequence to a ball?"

Poor Mary's countenance fell, as the bright vision of her imagination melted into air.

"Without my mother's permission," said she, "I shall certainly not think of, or even wish," with a sigh, "to go to the ball; and if she has already refused it, that is enough."

Lady Emily regarded her with astonishment. "Pray, is it only on Sundays you make a point of disobeying your mother?"

"It is only when I conceive a higher duty is required of me," answered Mary.

"Why, I confess I used to think, that, to honour one's father and mother, *was* a duty, till you shewed me the contrary. I have to thank you for ridding me of that vulgar prejudice. And now, after setting me such a noble example of independence, you seem to have got a new light on the subject yourself."

"My obedience and disobedience both proceed from the same source," answered Mary. "My first duty I have been taught

is to worship my Maker—my next to obey my mother. My own gratification never can come in competition with either."

"Well, I really can't enter into a religious controversy with you; but it seems to me, the sin, if it is one, is precisely the same, whether you play the naughty girl in going to one place or another. I can see no difference."

"To me it appears very different," said Mary; "and therefore I should be inexcusable, were I to choose the evil believing it to be such."

"Say what you will," cried her cousin pettishly, "you never will convince me there can be any harm in disobeying such a mother as your's—so unreasonable—so—."

"The Bible makes no exceptions," interrupted Mary, gently; "it is not because of the reasonableness of our parents' commands that we are required to obey them, but because it is the will of God."

"You certainly are a Methodist—there's no denying it. I have fought some hard battles for you, but I see I must give you up. The thing won't conceal."—This was said with such an air of vexation, that Mary burst into a fit of laughter.

"And yet you are the oddest compound," continued her cousin, "so gay and comical, and so little given to be shocked and scandalized at the wicked ways of others; or to find fault and lecture; or, in short, to do any of the insufferable things that your good people are so addicted to. I really don't know what to think of you."

"Think of me as a creature with too many faults of her own, to presume to meddle with those of others," replied Mary, smiling at her cousin's perplexity.

"Well, if all good people were like you, I do believe I should become a saint myself. If you are right, I must be wrong; but fifty years hence we shall settle that matter with spectacles on nose over our family Bibles. In the mean time, the business of

the ball room is much more pressing.—We really must decide upon something. Will you choose your own style, or shall I leave it to Madame Trieur to do us up exactly alike?"

"You have only to choose for yourself, my dear cousin," answered Mary. "You know I have no interest in it—at least not till I have received my mother's permission."

"I have told you already there is no chance of obtaining it. I had a *brouillerie* with her on the subject before I came to you."

"Then I intreat you will not say another word. It is a thing of so little consequence, that I am quite vexed to think that my mother should have been disturbed about it. Dear Lady Emily, if you love me, promise that you will not say another syllable on the subject."

"And this is all the thanks I get for my trouble and vexation," exclaimed Lady Emily, angrily; "bnt the truth is, I believe

you think it would be a sin to go to a ball—and as for dancing—Oh shocking! that that would be absolute ———. I really can't say the bad word you good people are so fond of using."

"I understand your meaning," answered Mary, laughing; "but, indeed, I have no such apprehensions. On the contrary, I am very fond of dancing; so fond, that I have often taken aunt Nicky for my partner in a Strathspey rather than sit still—and, to confess my weakness, I should like very much to go to a ball."

"Then you must and shall go to this one. It is really a pity that you should have enraged Lady Juliana so much by that unfortunate church-going; but for that, I think she might have been managed; and even now, I should not despair, if you would, like a good girl, beg pardon for what is past, and promise never to do so any more."

"Impossible!" replied Mary. "You surely cannot be serious in supposing I

would barter a positive duty for a trifling amusement?"

"O hang duties! they are odious things. And as for your amiable, dutiful, virtuous Goody Two-Shoes characters, I detest them. They never would go down with me, even in the nursery, with all the attractions of a gold watch, and coach and six. They were ever my abhorrence, as every species of canting and hypocrisy still is—"

Then struck with a sense of her own violence and impetuosity, contrasted with her cousin's meek unreproving manner, Lady Emily threw her arms around her, begging pardon, and assuring her she did not mean her.

"If you had," said Mary, returning her embrace, "you would only have told me what I am in some respects. Dull and childish, I know I am; for I am not the same creature I was at Lochmarlie"—and a tear trembled in her eye as she spoke—

"and troublesome, I am sure, you have found me."

"No, no!" eagerly interrupted Lady Emily; "you are the reverse of all that. You are the picture of my Edward, and every thing that is excellent and engaging; and I see, by that smile, you will go to the ball—there's a darling!"

Mary shook her head.

"I'll tell you what we can do," cried her persevering patroness, "We can go as masks, and Lady Juliana shall know nothing about it. That will save the scandal of an open revolt, or a tiresome dispute. Half the company will be masked; so, if you keep your own secret, nobody will find it out. Come, what characters shall we choose?"

"That of Janus, I think, would be the most suitable for me," said Mary. Then, in a serious tone, she added, "I can neither disobey nor deceive my mother. There-

fore, once for all, my dear cousin, let me entreat of you to be silent on a subject on which my mind is made up. I am perfectly sensible of your kindness, but any further discussion will be very painful to me."

Lady Emily was now too indignant to stoop to remonstrance. She quitted her cousin in great anger, and poor Mary felt as if she had lost her only friend.

"Alas!" sighed she, "how difficult it is to do right, when even the virtues of others throw obstacles in our way! and how easy our duties would be, could we kindly aid one another in the performance of them!"

But such is human nature. The real evils of life, of which we so loudly complain, are few in number, compared to the daily, hourly pangs we inflict on one another.

Lady Emily's resentment, though violent, was short-lived; and, in the certainty that either the mother would relent, or the daughter rebel, she ordered a dress for

Mary; but the night of the ball arrived, and both remained unshaken in their resolution. With a few words, Adelaide might have obtained the desired permission for her sister; but she chose to remain neuter, coldly declaring she never interfered in quarrels.

Mary beheld the splendid dresses and gay countenances of the party for the ball with feelings free from envy, though perhaps not wholly unmixed with regret. She gazed with the purest admiration on the extreme beauty of her sister, heightened as it was by the fantastic elegance of her dress, and contrasted with her own pale visage, and mourning habiliments.

"Indeed," thought she, as she turned from the mirror, with rather a mournful smile, "my aunt Nicky was in the right: I certainly am a poor *shilpit* thing."

As she looked again at her sister, she observed, that her ear-rings were not so handsome as those she had received from

Mrs. Macshake; and she instantly brought them, and requested Adelaide would wear them for that night.

Adelaide took them with her usual coolness—remarked how very magnificent they were—wished some old woman would take it into her head to make her such a present; and, as she clasped them in her ears, regarded herself with increased complacency. The hour of departure arrived; Lord Courtland and Lady Juliana were at length ready, and Mary found herself left to a *tête-à-tête* with Dr. Redgill; and, strange as it may seem, neither in a sullen nor melancholy mood. But after a single sigh, as the carriage drove off, she sat down with a cheerful countenance to play backgammon with the Doctor.

The following day, she heard of nothing but the ball and its delights; for both her mother and cousin sought (though from different motives) to heighten her regret at not having been there. But Mary lis-

tened to the details of all she had missed with perfect fortitude, and only rejoiced to hear they had all been so happy.

CHAPTER XVII.

> "Day follows night. The clouds return again
> After the falling of the latter rain;
> But to the aged blind shall ne'er return
> Grateful vicissitude: She still must mourn
> The sun, and moon, and every starry light,
> Eclipsed to her, and lost in everlasting night."
>
> PRIOR.

Amongst the numerous letters and parcels with which Mary had been entrusted by the whole county of ——, there was one she had received from the hands of Lady Maclaughlan, with a strict injunction to be the bearer of it herself; and, as even Lady Maclaughlan's wishes now wore an

almost sacred character in Mary's estimation, she was very desirous of fulfilling this her parting charge. But, in the thraldom in which she was kept, she knew not how that was to be accomplished. She could not venture to wait upon the lady to whom it was addressed, without her mother's permission; and she was aware, that to ask was upon every occasion only to be refused. In this dilemma, she had recourse to Lady Emily; and, shewing her the letter, craved her advice and assistance.

"Mrs. Lennox, Rose Hall," said her cousin, reading the superscription. "Oh! I don't think Lady Juliana will care a straw about your going there. She is merely an unfortunate blind old Lady, whom every body thinks it a bore to visit—myself, I'm afraid, amongst the number. We ought ll to have called upon her ages ago—so I shall go with you now."

Permission for Mary to accompany her was easily obtained; for Lady Juliana con-

sidered a visit to Mrs. Lennox as an act of penance rather than of pleasure; and Adelaide protested the very mention of her name gave her the vapours. There certainly was nothing that promised much gratification in what Mary had heard; and yet she already felt interested in this unfortunate blind lady, whom every body thought it a bore to visit, and she sought to gain some more information respecting her. But Lady Emily, though possessed of warm feelings, and kindly affections, was little given to frequent the house of mourning, or sympathise with the wounded spirit; and she yawned, as she declared she was very sorry for poor Mrs. Lennox, and would have made a point of seeing her oftener, could she have done her any good.

"But what can I possibly say to her," continued she, "after losing her husband, and having I don't know how many sons killed in battle, and her only daughter dying of a consumption, and herself going

blind in consequence of her grief for all these misfortunes—What can I possibly do for her, or say to her? Were I in her situation, I'm sure I should hate the sight and sound of any human being, and should give myself up entirely to despair."

"That would be but a pagan sacrifice," said Mary.

"What would you do in such desperate circumstances?" demanded Lady Emily.

"I would hope," answered Mary, meekly.

"But, in poor Mrs. Lennox's case, that would be to hope, though hope were lost; for what can she hope for now? She has still something to fear, however, as I believe she has still one son remaining, who is in the brunt of every battle; of course, she has nothing to expect but accounts of his death."

"But she may hope that heaven will preserve him, and—"

"That you will marry him. That would do excellently well, for he is as brave as a real Highlander, though he has the misfortune to be only half a one. His father, General Lennox, was a true Scot to the very tip of his tongue, and as proud and fiery as any chieftain need be. *His* death, certainly, was an improvement in the family. But there is Rose Hall, with its pretty shrubberies, and nice parterres, what do you say to becoming its mistress?"

"If I am to lay snares," answered Mary, laughing, "it must be for nobler objects than hedge-row elms and billocks green."

"O! it must be for black crags and naked hills! Your country really does vastly well to rave about! Lofty mountains and deep glens, and blue lakes and roaring rivers, are mighty fine sounding things; but I suspect corn fields and barn yards are quite as comfortable neighbours: so take my advice and marry Charles Lennox."

Mary only answered by singing, 'My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here," &c. as the carriage drew up.

"This is the property of Mrs. Lennox," said Lady Emily, in answer to some remark of her companion's: "she is the last of some ancient stock; and you see the family taste has been treated with all due respect."

Rose Hall was indeed perfectly English: it was a description of place of which there are none in Scotland; for it wore the appearance of antiquity, without the too usual accompaniments of devastation or decay; neither did any incongruities betray vicissitude of fortune, or change of owner; but the taste of the primitive possessor seemed to have been respected through ages, by his descendants; and the ponds remained as round, and the hedges as square, and the grass walks as straight, as the day they had been planned. The same old-fashioned respectability was also apparent in the interior of the mansion: The broad heavy

oaken stair-case, shone in all the lustre of bees wax; and the spacious sitting room, into which they were ushered, had its due allowance of Vandyke portraits, massive chairs, and china jars, standing much in the same positions they had been placed in a hundred years before.

To the delicate mind the unfortunate are always objects of respect: as the ancients held sacred those places which had been blasted by lightning, so the feeling heart considers the afflicted as having been touched by the hand of God himself. Such were the sensations with which Mary found herself in the presence of the venerable Mrs. Lennox—venerable rather through affliction than age; for sorrow, more than time, had dimmed the beauty of former days, though enough still remained to excite interest and engage affection, in the mournful, yet gentle expression of her countenance, and the speaking silence of her darkened eyes. On hearing the names of her

visitors, she arose, and, guided by a little girl, who had been sitting at her feet, advanced to meet them, and welcomed them with a kindness and simplicity of manner, that reminded Mary of the home she had left, and the maternal tenderness of her beloved aunt. She delivered her credentials, which Mrs. Lennox received with visible surprise; but laid the letter aside without any comments.

Lady Emily began some self-accusing apologies for the length of time that had intervened since her last visit; but Mrs. Lennox gently interrupted her.

"Do not blame yourself, my dear Lady Emily," said she, "for what is so natural at your age; and do not suppose I am so unreasonable, as to expect that the young and the gay should seek for pleasure in the company of an old blind woman; at your time of life, I would not have courted distress any more than you."

"At every time of life," said Lady Emily, "I am sure you must have been a very different being from what I am, or ever shall be."

"Ah! you little know what changes adversity makes in the character," said Mrs. Lennox mournfully; "and may you never know—unless it is for your good."

"I doubt much if I shall ever be good on any terms," answered Lady Emily, in a half melancholy tone; "I don't think I have the elements of goodness in my composition: but here is my cousin, who is fit to stand proxy for all the virtues."

Mrs. Lennox involuntarily turned her mild but sightless eyes towards Mary, then heaved a sigh, and shook her head, as she was reminded of her deprivation. Mary was too much affected to speak; but the hand that was extended to her, she pressed with fervour to her lips, while her eyes overflowed with tears. The language of sympathy is soon understood. Mrs. Len-

nox seemed to feel the tribute of pity and respect that flowed from Mary's warm heart, and from that moment they felt towards each other that indefinite attraction, which however it may be ridiculed, certainly does sometimes influence our affections.

"That is a picture of your son, Colonel Lennox, is it not?" asked Lady Emily, "I mean the one that hangs below the lady in the satin gown with the bird on her hand."

Mrs. Lennox answered in the affirmative; then added, with a sigh, "and when I *could* look on that face, I forgot all I had lost; but I was too fond, too proud a mother. Look at it, my dear," taking Mary's hand, and leading her to the well known spot, while her features brightened with an expression which shewed maternal vanity was not yet extinct in the mourner's heart. "He was only eighteen," continued she, "when that was done; and many a hot sun has burned on that fair brow;

and many a fearful sight has met these sweet eyes since then; and sadly that face may be changed; but I shall never see it more!"

"Indeed," said Lady Emily, affecting to be gay, while a tear stood in her eye, "it is a very dangerous face to look on; and I should be afraid to trust myself with it, were not my heart already pledged; as for my cousin there, there is no fear of her falling a sacrifice to hazel eyes and chesnut hair—her imagination is all on the side of ..dy locks and frosty grey eyes; and I .ould doubt if Cupid himself would have ny chance with her, unless he appeared in .rtan plaid and Highland bonnet."

"Then my Charles would have some," .d Mrs. Lennox, with a faint smile, "for .as lately been promoted to the com-.d of a Highland regiment."

Indeed!" said Lady Emily, "that is .y gratifying, and you have reason to be

proud of Colonel Lennox; he has distinguished himself upon every occasion."

"Ah! the days of my pride are now past," replied Mrs. Lennox, with a sigh; "'tis only the more honour, the greater danger, and I am weary of such bloody honours. See there!" pointing to another part of the room, where hung a group of five lovely children, "three of these cherub heads were laid low in battle; the fourth, my Louisa, died of a broken heart for the loss of her brothers. Oh! what can human power, or earthly honours do, to cheer th mother who has wept o'er her children graves! But there *is* a power," raising he darkened eyes to heaven, "that can sustain even a mother's heart; and here," laying her hand upon an open Bible, "is t balm he has graciously vouchsafed to p into the wounded spirit. My comfort i that my boys died nobly, but that they d Christians."

Lady Emily and Mary were both silent from different causes. The former was at a loss what to say—the latter felt too much affected to trust her voice with the words of sympathy that hovered on her lips.

"I ought to beg your pardon, my dears," said Mrs. Lennox, after a pause, for talking in this serious manner to you, who cannot be supposed to enter into sorrows to which you are strangers. But you must excuse me, though my heart does sometimes run over."

"Oh do not suppose," said Mary, making an effort to conquer her feelings, "that we are so heartless as to refuse to take a part in the afflictions of others—surely none can be so selfish—and might I be allowed to come often—very often—" She stopped and blushed; for she felt that her feelings were carrying her farther than she was warranted to go.

Mrs. Lennox kindly pressed her hand.—"Ah! God hath, indeed, sent some into

the world, whose province it is to refresh the afflicted, and lighten the eyes of the disconsolate—such, I am sure, you would be to me—for I feel my heart revive at the sound of your voice; it reminds me of my heart's darling, my Louisa! and the remembrance of her, though sad, is still sweet. Come to me, then, when you will, and God's blessing, and the blessing of the blind and desolate, will reward you."

Lady Emily turned away, and it was not till they had been some time in the carriage, that Mary was able to express the interest this visit had excited, and her anxious desire to be permitted to renew it.

"It is really an extraordinary kind of delight, Mary, that you take in being made miserable," said her cousin, wiping her eyes; "for my part, it makes me quite wretched to witness suffering that I can't relieve; and how can you or I possibly do poor Mrs. Lennox any good? We can't bring back her sons."

"No; but we can bestow our sympathy, and that, I have been taught, is always a consolation to the afflicted."

"I don't quite understand the nature of that mysterious feeling called sympathy. When I go to visit Mrs. Lennox, she always sets me a crying, and I try to set her a laughing—Is that what you call sympathy?"

Mary smiled, and shook her head.

"Then, I suppose, it is sympathy to blow one's nose—and—and read the Bible. Is that it? or what is it?"

Mary declared, she could not define it; and Lady Emily insisted she could not comprehend it.

"You will some day or other," said Mary; "for none, I believe, have ever passed through life without feeling, or at least requiring its support; and it is well, perhaps, that we should know betimes, how to receive, as well as how to bestow it."

"I don't see the necessity at all. I know

I should hate mortally to be what you call sympathised with; indeed it appears to me the height of selfishness in any body to like it. If I am wretched, it would be no comfort to me to make every body else wretched; and were I in Mrs. Lennox's place, I would have more spirit than to speak about my misfortunes."

"But Mrs. Lennox does not appear to be what you call a spirited creature. She seems all sweetness, and—"

"O sweet enough, certainly!—But her's is a sort of Eolian harp, that lulls me to sleep. I tire to death of people, who have only two or three notes in their character. By the bye, Mary, you have a tolerable compass yourself, when you choose; though I don't think you have science enough for a *bravura: there* I certainly have the advantage of you, as I flatter myself my mind is a full band in itself. My kettle drums and trumpets I keep for Lady Juliana, and I am quite in the humour for

giving her a flourish to-day. I really require something of an exhilarating nature after Mrs. Lennox's dead march."

An unusual bustle seemed to pervade Beech Park as the carriage stopped, and augured well for its mistress' intention of being more than usually vivacious. It was found to be occasioned by the arrival of her brother Lord Lindore's servants and horses, with the interesting intelligence that his Lordship would immediately follow; and Lady Emily, wild with delight, forgot every thing in the prospect of embracing her brother.

"How does it happen," said Mary, when her cousin's transports had a little subsided, "that you, who are in such ectacies at the idea of seeing your brother, have scarcely mentioned his name to me?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, I fear I was beginning to forget there was such a person in the world. I have not seen him since I was ten years old. At that time he

went to college, and from thence to the Continent. So all I remember of him is, that he was very handsome, and very good humoured; and all that I have heard of him is, that wherever he goes he is the 'glass of fashion, and the mould of form'—not that he is much of a Hamlet, I've a notion, in other respects: So pray put off that Ophelia phiz, and don't look as if you were of ladies most deject and wretched, when every body else is gay and happy. Come, give your last sigh to the Lennox, and your first smile to *Lindore*."

"That is sympathy," said Mary.

CHAPTER XVIII.

> "Quelle fureur, dit-il, quel aveugle caprice
> Quand le dîner est prêt. ————————"
>
> BOILEAU.

"I HOPE your Lordship has no thoughts of waiting dinner for Lord Lindore?" asked Dr. Redgill, with a face of alarm, as seven o'clock struck, and neither dinner nor Lord Lindore appeared.

"I have no thoughts upon the subject," answered Lord Courtland, as he turned

over some new caricatures, with as much *nonchalance* as if it had been mid-day.

"That's enough, my Lord; but I suspect Mr. Marshall, in his officiousness, takes the liberty of thinking for you, and that we shall have no dinner without orders," rising to pull the bell.

"We ought undoubtedly to wait for Frederick," said Lady Juliana; "it is of no consequence when we sit down to table."

A violent yell from the sleeping Beauty on the rug, sounded like a summary judgment on her mistress.

"What is the meaning of this?" cried her Ladyship, flying to the offended fair one, in all the transports of pity and indignation; "how can you, Dr. Redgill, presume to treat my dog in such a manner?"

"Me treat your Ladyship's dog!" exclaimed the Doctor, in well-feigned astonishment—"'Pon my honour!—I'm quite at a loss!—I'm absolutely confounded!"

"Yes! I saw you plainly give her a kick, and—"

"Me kick Beauty!—after that!—'Pon my soul, I should just as soon have thought of kicking my own grandmother. I did give her a *leettle*—a very *leettle* shove, just with the point of my toe, as I was going to pull the bell; but it couldn't have hurt a fly. I assure you it would be one of the last actions of my life to treat Beauty ill—Beauty!—poor Beauty!"—affecting to pat and soothe, by way of covering his transgression. But neither Beauty nor her mistress were to be taken in by the Doctor's cajoleries. The one felt, and the other saw the indignity he had committed; and his caresses and protestations were all in vain. The fact was, the Doctor's indignation was so raised by Lady Juliana's remark, made in all the plenitude of a late luncheon, that, had it been herself instead of her favourite, he could scarcely have refrained from this testimony of his detestation and contempt.

But much as he despised her, he felt the necessity of propitiating her at this moment, when dinner itself depended upon her decision; for Lord Courtland was perfectly neutral, Lady Emily was not present, and a servant waited to receive orders.

"I really believe it's hunger that's vexing her, poor brute!" continued he, with an air of unfeigned sympathy; "she knows the dinner hour as well as any of us. Indeed the instinct of dogs in that respect is wonderful—Providence has really—a—hem!—indeed it's no joke to tamper with dogs, when they've got the notion of dinner in their heads. A friend of mine had a very fine animal—just such another as poor Beauty there—she had always been accustomed, like Beauty, to attend the family to dinner at a particular hour; but one day, by some accident, instead of sitting down at five, she was kept waiting till half past six; the consequence was, the disappoint-

ment operating upon an empty stomach, brought on an attack of the hydrophobia, and the poor thing was obliged to be shot the following morning. I think your Lordship said—Dinner," in a loud voice to the servant; and Lady Juliana, though still sullen, did not dissent.

For an hour the Doctor's soul was in a paradise still more substantial than a Turk's; for it was lapt in the richest of soups and *ragoûts*, and, secure of their existence, it smiled at ladies of quality, and deified their lap-dogs.

Dinner passed away, and supper succeeded, and breakfast; dinner and supper revolved, and still no Lord Lindore appeared. But this excited no alarm in the family: It was Lord Courtland's way, and it was Lady Juliana's way, and it was all their ways, not to keep to their appointed time, and they therefore experienced none of the vulgar consternation incident to common minds, when the expected guest fails to

appear. Lady Emily indeed wondered, and was provoked, and impatient; but she was not alarmed; and Mary amused herself with contrasting in her own mind the difference of her aunts' feelings in similar circumstances.

"Dear aunt Grizzy would certainly have been in tears these two days, fancying the thousand deaths Lord Lindore must have died; and aunt Jacky would have been inveighing from morning till night against the irregularities of young men. And aunt Nicky would have been lamenting that the black cock had been roasted yesterday, or that there would be no fish for to-morrow." And the result of Mary's comparison was, that her aunts' feelings, however troublesome, were better than no feelings at all." "They are, to be sure, something like brambles," thought she; "they fasten upon one in every possible way, but still they are better than the faded exotics of fashionable life."

At last, on the third day, when dinner was nearly over, and Dr. Redgill was about to remark for the third time, "I think it's as well we didn't wait for Lord Lindore;" the door opened, and, without warning or bustle, Lord Lindore walked calmly into the room.

Lady Emily, uttering an exclamation of joy, threw herself into his arms. Lord Courtland was roused to something like animation, as he cordially shook hands with his son; Lady Juliana flew into raptures at the beauty of his Italian greyhound; Adelaide, at the first glance, decided, that her cousin was worthy of falling in love with her; Mary thought on the happiness of the family re-union; and Dr. Redgill offered up a silent thanksgiving, that this fracas had not happened ten minutes sooner, otherwise the woodcocks would have been as cold as death. Chairs were placed by the officious attendants in every possible direction; and the discarded first course

was threatening to displace the third: But Lord Lindore seemed quite insensible to all these attentions; he stood surveying the company with a *nonchalance*, that had nothing of rudeness in it, but seemed merely the result of high-bred ease. His eye, for a moment, rested upon Adelaide. He then slightly bowed and smiled, as in recognition of their juvenile acquaintance.

"I really can't recommend either the turtle soup, or the venison, to your Lordship to-day," said Dr. Redgill, who experienced certain uneasy sensations at the idea of beholding them resume their stations, something resembling those which Macbeth testified at sight of Banquo's ghost, or Hamlet on contemplating Yorick's skull—"after travelling, there is nothing like a light dinner, allow me to recommend this *prretty leettle cuisse de poulet en papillote*—and here are some fascinating *beignets d'abricots*—quite foreign."

"If there is any roast beef or boiled mutton to be had, pray let me have it," said Lord Lindore, waving off the zealous *maître d'hotel*, as he kept placing dish after dish before him.

"Roast beef, or boiled mutton!" ejaculated the Doctor, with a sort of internal convulsion; "he is certainly mad."

"How did you contrive to arrive without being heard by me, Frederick?" asked Lady Emily; "my ears have been wide open these two days and three nights watching your approach?"

"I walked from Newberry house," answered he, carelessly: "I met Lord Newberry two days ago, as I was coming here, and he persuaded me to alter my course, and accompany him home."

"Vastly flattering to your friends here," said Lady Emily, in a tone of pique.

"What! you walked all the way from Newberry," exclaimed the Earl, "and the

ground covered with snow. How could you do so foolish a thing?"

"Simply because, as the children say, I liked it," replied Lord Lindore, with a smile.

"That's just of a piece with his liking to eat boiled mutton," muttered the Doctor to Mary; "and yet to look at him, one would really not expect such gross stupidity."

There certainly was nothing in Lord Lindore's appearance, that denoted either coarseness of taste or imbecility of mind. On the contrary, he was an elegant looking young man, rather slightly formed, and of the middle size, possessing that ease and grace in all his movements, which a perfect proportion alone can bestow. There was nothing foreign or *recherché*, either in his dress or deportment; both were plain, even to simplicity; yet an almost imperceptible air of *hauteur* was mingled with the good-

humoured indifference of his manner. He spoke little, and seemed rather to endure, than to be gratified by attentions; his own were chiefly directed to his dog, as he was more intent on feeding it, than on answering the questions that were put to him. There never was any thing to be called conversation at the dinner table at Beech Park; and the general practice was in no danger of being departed from on the present occasion. The Earl hated to converse—it was a bore; and he now merely exchanged a few desultory sentences with his son, as he ate his olives and drank his claret. Lady Juliana, indeed, spoke even more than her usual quantity of nonsense, but nobody listened to it. Lady Emily was somewhat perplexed in her notions about her brother. He was handsome and elegant, and appeared good-humoured and gentle; yet something was wanting to fill up the measure of her expectations, and a latent feeling of dis-

appointment lurked in her heart. Adelaide was indignant that he had not instantly paid her the most marked attention, and revenged herself by her silence. In short, Lord Lindore's arrival seemed to have added little or nothing to the general stock of pleasure; and the effervescence of joy—the rapture of *sensation*, like some subtle essence, had escaped almost as soon as it was perceived.

"How stupid every body always is at a dinner table!" exclaimed Lady Emily, rising abruptly with an air of chagrin. "I believe it is the fumes of the meat that dulls one's senses, and renders them so detestable. I long to see you in the drawing-room Frederic. I've a notion you are more of a carpet knight, than a knight of the round table; so pray," in a whisper as she passed, "leave papa to be snored asleep by Dr. Redgill, and do you follow us—here's metal more attractive," pointing to the sis-

ters, as they quitted the room;—and she followed without waiting for her brother's reply.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Io dubito, Signor M. Pietro che il mio Cortegiano non sarà stato altro che fatica mia, e fastidio degli amici."

BALDASSARRE CASTIGLIONE.

LORD Lindore was in no haste to avail himself of his sister's invitation; and when he did, it was evident his was a "mind not to be changed by place;" for he entered more with the air of one who was tired of the company he had left, than expecting pleasure from the society he sought.

"Do come and entertain us, Lindore," cried Lady Emily, as he entered, "for we are all heartily sick of one another. A

snow storm, and a lack of company, are things hard to be borne; it is only the expectancy of your arrival that has kept us alive these two days, and now pray don't let us die away of the reality."

"You have certainly taken a most effectual method of sealing my lips," said her brother with a smile.

"How so?"

"By telling me that I am expected to be vastly entertaining, since every word I utter can only serve to dispel the illusion, and prove that I am gifted with no such miraculous power."

"I don't think it requires any miraculous power, either to entertain or be entertained. For my part, I flatter myself I can entertain any man, woman, or child, in the kingdom, when I choose; and as for being entertained, that is still an easier matter. I seldom meet with any body who is not entertaining, either from their folly, or their affectation, or their stupidity, or their vani-

ty; or, in short, something of the ridiculous, that renders them not merely supportable, but positively amusing."

"How extremely happy you must be," said Lord Lindore.

"Happy! no—I don't know that my feelings precisely amount to happiness neither; for at the very time I'm most diverted, I'm sometimes disgusted too, and often provoked. My spirit gets chafed, and—"

"You long to box the ears of all your acquaintances," said her brother, laughing. "Well, no matter—there is nothing so enviable as a facility of being amused, and even the excitement of anger is perhaps preferable to the stagnation of indifference."

"O, thank heaven! I know nothing about indifference—I leave that to Adelaide."

Lord Lindore turned his eyes with more animation than he had yet evinced towards his cousin, who sat reading, apparently paying no attention to what was going on.

He regarded her for a considerable time with an expression of admiration; but Adelaide, though she was conscious of his gaze, calmly pursued her studies.

"Come, you positively must do something to signalize yourself. I assure you, it is expected of you, that you should be the soul of the company. Here is Adelaide waltzes like an angel, when she can get a partner to her liking."

"But I waltze like a mere mortal," said Lord Lindore, seating himself at a table, and turning over the leaves of a book.

"And I am engaged to play billiards with my uncle," said Adelaide, rising with a blush of indignation.

"Shall we have some music then? Can you bear to listen to our croakings, after the warbling of your Italian nightingales?" asked Lady Emily.

"I should like very much to hear you sing," answered her brother, with an air of the most perfect indifference.

"Come then, Mary, do you be the one to 'untwist the chains that tie the hidden soul of harmony.' Give us your Scotch Exile, pray? it is tolerably appropriate to the occasion, though an English one would have been still more so; but, as you say, there is nothing in this country to make a song about."

Mary would rather have declined, but she saw a refusal would displease her cousin; and she was not accustomed to consult her own inclination in such frivolous matters: She therefore seated herself at the harp, and sung the following verses:—

THE EXILE.

The weary wanderer may roam
  To seek for bliss in change of scene;
Yet still the loved idea of his home,
  And of the days he there has seen,
Pursue him with a fond regret,
Like rays from suns that long have set.

'Tis not the sculptor's magic art,
  'Tis not th' heroic deeds of yore,

That fill and gratify the heart.
  No! 'tis affection's tender lore—
The thought of friends, and love's first sigh,
When youth, and hope, and health were nigh.

What though on classic ground we tread,
  What though we breathe a genial air—
Can these restore the bliss that's fled?
  Is not remembrance ever there?
Can any soil protect from grief,
Or any air breathe soft relief?

No! the sick soul, that wounded flies
  From all its early thoughts held dear,
Will more some gleam of memory prize,
  That draws the long lost treasure near;
And warmly presses to its breast
The very thought that mars its rest.

Some mossy stone, some torrent rude,
  Some moor unknown to worldly ken,
Some weeping birches, fragrant wood,
  Or some wild roebuck's fern-clad glen.
Yes! these his aching heart delight,
These bring his country to his sight.

Ere the song was ended, Lord Lindore had sauntered away to the billiard-room, singing, "Oh! Jiove Omnipotente!" and seemingly quite unconscious that any attentions were due from him in return. But there, even Adelaide's charms failed to

attract, in spite of the variety of graceful movements practised before him—the beauty of the extended arm, the majestic step, and the exclamations of the enchanting voice. Lord Lindore kept his station by the fire, in a musing attitude, from which he was only roused occasionally by the caresses of his dog. At supper, it was still worse: He placed himself by Mary, and when he spoke, it was only of Scotland.

"Well—what do you think of Lindore?" demanded Lady Emily of her aunt and cousins, as they were about to separate for the night. "Is he not divine?"

"Perfectly so!" replied Lady Juliana, with all the self-importance of a fool. "I assure you, I think very highly of him. He is a vastly charming, clever young man—perfectly beautiful, and excessively amiable; and his attention to his dog is quite delightful—it is so uncommon to see men at all kind to their dogs. I assure you, I have known many who were absolutely

cruel to them—beat them, and starved them, and did a thousand shocking things; and—"

"Pray, Adelaide, what is your opinion of my brother?"

"Oh! I—I—have no doubt he is extremely amiable," replied Adelaide, with a gentle yawn. "As mamma says, his attentions to his dog prove it."

"And you, Mary, are your remarks to be equally judicious and polite?"

Mary, in all the sincerity of her heart, said, she thought him by much the handsomest and most elegant-looking man she had ever seen. And there she stopped.

"Yes; I know all that. But—however, no matter—I only wish he may have sense enough to fall in love with you, Mary. How happy I should be to see you Lady Lindore!—*En attendant*—you must take care of your heart; for I hear he is *un peu volage*—and, moreover, that he admires none but *les dames Mariées*. As for Ade-

laide, there is no fear of her: She will never cast such a pearl away upon one who is merely, no doubt, extremely amiable," retorting Adelaide's ironical tone.

"Then you may feel equally secure upon my account," said Mary, "as I assure you I am in still less danger of losing mine, after the warning you have given."

This off-hand sketch of her brother's character, which Lady Emily had thoughtlessly given, produced the most opposite effects on the minds of the sisters. With Adelaide, it increased his consequence, and enhanced his value. It would be no vulgar conquest to fix and reform one who was notorious for his inconstancy and libertine principles; and, from that moment, she resolved to use all the influence of her charms to captivate and secure the heart of her cousin. In Mary's well regulated mind other feelings arose. Although she was not one of the outrageously virtuous, who storm and rail at the very mention of

vice, and deem it contamination to hold any intercourse with the vicious, she yet possessed proper ideas of the distinction to be drawn; and the hope of finding a friend and brother in her cousin, now gave way to the feeling, that in future she could only consider him as a mere common acquaintance.

CHAPTER XX.

"On sera ridicule et je n'oserai rire!"
BOILEAU.

IN honour of her brother's return, Lady Emily resolved to celebrate it with a ball; and always prompt in following up her plans, she fell to work immediately with her visiting list.

"Certainly," said she, as she scanned it over, "there never was any family so afflicted in their acquaintances as we are. At least one half of the names here belong to the most insufferable people on the

face of the earth. The Claremonts, and the Edgefields, and the Bouveries, and the Sedleys, and a few more, are very well; but can any thing, in human form, be more insupportable than the rest; for instance, that wretch Lady Placid?"

"Does her merit lie only in her name then?" asked Mary.

"You shall judge for yourself, when I have given you a slight sketch of her character. Lady Placid, in the opinion of all sensible persons in general, and myself in particular, is a vain, weak, conceited, vulgar egotist. In her own eyes she is a clever, well-informed, elegant, amiable woman; and though I have spared no pains to let her know how detestable I think her, it is all in vain: she remains as firmly entrenched in her own good opinion, as folly and conceit can make her; and I have the despair of seeing all my buffetings fall blunted to the ground. She reminds me of some odious fairy or genii I have read

of, who possessed such a power in their person, that every hostile weapon levelled against them was immediately turned into some agreeable present—stones became balls of silk—arrows, flowers—swords, feathers, &c. Even so it is with Lady Placid: The grossest insult that could be offered, she would construe into an elegant compliment—the very crimes of others, she seems to consider as so much incense offered up at the shrine of her own immaculate virtue. I'm certain she thinks she deserves to be canonized for having kept out of Doctors' Commons. Never is any affair of that sort alluded to, that she does not cast such a triumphant look towards her husband, as much as to say, 'Here am I, the paragon of faithful wives and virtuous matrons!' Were I in his place, I should certainly throw a plate at her head. And here, you may take this passing remark—How much more odious people are who have radical faults, than those who commit, I do

not say positive crimes, but occasional weaknesses. Even a noble nature may fall into a great error; but what is that to the ever-enduring pride, envy, malice, and conceit of a little mind. Yes—I would, at any time, rather be the fallen, as the one to exult over the fall of another. Then, as a mother, she is, if possible, still more meritorious a woman, (this is the way she talks:) a woman has nobly performed her part to her country, and for posterity, when she has brought a family of fine healthy children into the world. 'I can't agree with you,' I reply; 'I think many mothers have brought children into the world, who would have been much better out of it. A mother's merit must depend solely upon how she brings up her children,' (her's are the most spoiled brats in Christendom.) 'There I perfectly agree with you, Lady Emily. As you observe, it is not every mother who does her duty by her children. Indeed, I may say to you, it is not every

one that will make the sacrifices for their family I have done; but thank God! I am richly repaid. My children are every thing I could wish them to be!'—Every thing of her's, as a matter of course, must be superior to every other person's, and even what she is obliged to share in common with others, acquires some miraculous charm in operating upon her. Thus it is impossible for any one to imagine the delight she takes in bathing; and as for the sun, no mortal can conceive the effect it has upon her. If she was to have the plague, she would assure you it was owing to some peculiar virtue in her blood; and if she was to be put in the pillory, she would ascribe it entirely to her great merit. If her coachman was to make her a declaration of love, she would impute it to the boundless influence of her charms; that every man who sees her does not declare his passion, is entirely owing to the well-known severity of her morals, and the dignity of her deportment. If she is

amongst the first invited to my ball, that will be my eagerness to secure her; if the very last, it will be a mark of my friendship, and the easy footing we are upon. If not invited at all, then it will be my jealousy. In short, the united strength of worlds, would not shake that woman's good opinion of herself; and the intolerable part of it is, there are so many fools in this one, that she actually passes with the multitude for being a charming sweet-tempered woman—always the same—always pleased and contented. Contented! just as like contentment as the light emitted by putridity resembles the divine halo! But too much of her—Let her have a card however.

"Then comes Mrs. Wiseacre, that renowned lawgiver, who lavishes her advice on all who will receive it, without hope of fee or reward, except that of being thought wiser than any body else. But, like many more deserving characters, she meets with nothing but ingratitude in return; and the

wise sentences that are for ever hovering around her pursed-up mouth, have only served to render her insupportable. This is her mode of proceeding—'If I might presume to advise Lady Emily;' or, 'if my opinion could be supposed to have any weight;' or, 'if my experience goes for any thing;' or, 'I'm an old woman now, but I think I know something of the world;' or, 'if a friendly hint of mine would be of any service:'—then when very desperate, it is, 'however averse I am to obtrude my advice, yet as I consider it my duty, I must for once;' or, 'it certainly is no affair of mine, at the same time I must just observe,' &c. &c. I don't say that she insists, however, upon your swallowing all the advice she crams you with; for provided she has the luxury of giving it, it can make little difference how it is taken; because whatever befals you, be it good or bad, it is equally a matter of exultation to her. Thus she has the satisfaction of saying, 'if poor

Mrs. Dabble had but followed my advice, and not have taken these pills of Dr. Doolittle's, she would have been alive to-day, depend upon it;' or, 'if Sir Thomas Speckle had but taken advantage of a friendly hint I threw out some time ago, about the purchase of the Drawrent estate, he might have been a man worth ten thousand a-year at this moment;' or, 'if Lady Dull hadn't been so infatuated as to neglect the caution I gave her about Bob Squander, her daughter might have been married to Nabob Gull.'

"But there is a strange contradiction about Mrs. Wiseacre, for though it appears that all her friends' misfortunes proceed from neglecting her advice, it is no less apparent, by her account, that her own are all occasioned by following the advice of others. She is for ever doing foolish things, and laying the blame upon her neighbours. Thus, 'had it not been for my friend Mrs. Jobbs there, I never would have parted

with my house for an old song as I did;' or, 'it was entirely owing to Miss Glue's obstinacy, that I was robbed of my diamond necklace;' or, 'I have to thank my friend, Colonel Crack, for getting my carriage smashed to pieces.' In short, she has the most comfortable repository of stupid friends to have recourse to, of any body I ever knew. Now what I have to warn you against, Mary, is the sin of ever listening to any of her advices. She will preach to you about the pinning of your gown, and the curling of your hair, till you would think it impossible not to do exactly what she wants you to do. She will inquire with the greatest solicitude what shoemaker you employ, and will shake her head most significantly when she hears it is any other than her own. But if ever I detect you paying the smallest attention to any of her recommendations, positively I shall have done with you."

Mary laughingly promised to turn a deaf

ear to all Mrs. Wiseacre's wisdom; and her cousin proceeded:

"Then here follows a swarm 'as thick as idle motes in sunny ray,' and much of the same importance, methinks, in the scale of being. Married ladies only celebrated for their good dinners, or their pretty equipages, or their fine jewels. How I should scorn to be talked of as the appendage to any soups or pearls! Then there are the daughters of these ladies—Misses, who are mere misses, and nothing more. Oh! the insipidity of a mere Miss! a soft simpering thing with pink cheeks, and pretty hair, and fashionable clothes;—*sans* eyes for any thing but lovers—*sans* ears for any thing but flattery—*sans* taste for any thing but balls—*sans* brains for any thing at all! Then there are ladies who are neither married nor young, and who strive with all their might to talk most delightfully, that the charms of their conversation may efface the marks of the crows feet; but 'all these

I passen by, and nameless numbers moe.' And now comes the Hon. Mrs. Downe Wright, a person of considerable shrewdness and penetration—vulgar, but unaffected. There is no politeness, no gentleness in her heart; but she possesses some warmth, much honesty, and great hospitality. She has acquired the character of being, Oh, odious thing! a clever woman! There are two descriptions of clever women, observe; the one is endowed with corporeal cleverness—the other with mental; and I don't know which of the two is the greater nuisance to society; the one torments you with her management—the other with her smart sayings; the one is for ever rattling her bunch of keys in your ears—the other electrifies you with the shock of her wit; and both talk *so* much and *so* loud, and are such egotists, that I rather think a clever woman is even a greater term of reproach than a good creature. But to return to that clever woman, Mrs. Downe Wright:

she is a widow, left with the management of an only son—a common place, weak young man. No one, I believe, is more sensible of his mental deficiencies than his mother; but she knows that a man of fortune is, in the eyes of the many, a man of consequence; and she therefore wisely talks of it as his chief characteristic. To keep him in good company, and get him well-married, is all her aim; and this, she thinks, will not be difficult, as he is very handsome—possesses an estate of ten thousand a-year—and succeeds to some Scotch Lord Something's title—There's for you, Mary! She once had views of Adelaide, but Adelaide met the advances with so much scorn, that Mrs. Downe Wright declared she was thankful she had shewn the cloven foot in time; for that she never would have done for a wife to her William. Now you are the very thing to suit, for you have no cloven feet to shew."

"Or, at least, you are not so quick-sighted as Mrs. Downe Wright. You have not spied them yet, it seems," said Mary, with a smile.

"O, as to that, if you had them, I should defy you, or any one, to hide them from me. When I reflect upon the characters of most of my acquaintances, I sometimes think nature has formed my optics only to see disagreeables."

"That must be a still more painful faculty of vision than even the second sight," said Mary; "but I should think it depended very much upon yourself to counteract it."

"Impossible! my perceptions are so peculiarly alive to all that is obnoxious to them, that I could as soon preach my eyes into blindness, or my ears into deafness, as put down my feelings with chopping logic. If people *will* be affected and ridiculous, why must I live in a state of warfare with my-

self, on account of the feelings they rouse within me?"

"If people *will* be irritable," said Mary, laughing, "why must others sacrifice their feelings to gratify them?"

"Because mine are natural feelings, and theirs are artificial. A very saint must sicken at sight of affectation, you'll allow. Vulgarity, even innate vulgarity, is bearable—stupidity itself is pardonable—but affectation is never to be endured or forgiven."

"It admits of palliation, at least," answered Mary. "I daresay there are many people who would have been pleasing and natural in their manners, had not their parents and teachers interfered. There are many, I believe, who have not courage to shew themselves such as they are—some who are naturally affected—and many, very many, who have been taught affectation as a necessary branch of education."

"Yes—as my governesses would have taught me; but, thank heaven! I got the better of them. *Fascinating* was what they wanted to make me; but whenever the word was mentioned, I used to knit my brows, and frown upon them in such a sort. The frown, I know, sticks by me; but no matter, a frowning brow is better than a false heart, and I defy any one to say that I am fascinating."

"There certainly must be some fascination about you, otherwise I should never have sat so long listening to you," said Mary, as she rose from the table at which she had been assisting to dash off the at-homes.

"But you must listen to me a little longer," cried her cousin, seizing her hand to detain her: "I have not got half through my detestables yet; but, to humour you, I shall let them go for the present. And now, that you mayn't suppose I am utterly insensible to excellence, you must

suffer me to shew you, that I can and do appreciate worth, when I can find it. I confess, my talent lies fully as much in discovering the ridiculous as the amiable; and I am equally ready to acknowledge it is a fault, and no mark of superior wit or understanding; since it is much easier to hit off the glaring caricature lines of deformity, than the finer and more exquisite touches of beauty, especially for one who reads as he runs—the sign posts are sure to catch the eye. But now for my favourite—no matter for her name—it would frighten you were you to hear it. In the first place, she is, as some of your old divines say, *hugely religious*; but then she keeps her piety in its proper place, and where it ought to be—in her very soul. It is never a stumbling block in other people's way, or interfering with other people's affairs. Her object is to *be*, not to *seem*, religious; and there is neither hypocrisy nor austerity necessary for that. She is forbearing,

without meanness—gentle, without insipidity—sincere, without rudeness. She practises all the virtues herself, and seems quite unconscious that others don't do the same. She is, if I may trust the expression of her eye, almost as much alive to the ridiculous as I am; but she is only diverted where I am provoked. She never bestows false praise, even upon her friends; but a simple approval from her is of more value than the finest panegyric from another. She never finds occasion to censure or condemn the conduct of any one, however flagrant it may be in the eyes of others; because she seems to think virtue is better expressed by her own actions than by her neighbour's vices. She cares not for admiration, but is anxious to do good and give pleasure. To sum up the whole, she could listen with patience to Lady Placid; she could bear to be advised by Mrs. Wiseacre; she could stand the scrutiny of Mrs. Downe Wright;

and, hardest task of all, (throwing her arms around Mary's neck,) she can bear with all my ill-humour and impertinence."

CHAPTER XXI.

"Have I then no fears for thee, my *mother?*
Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years—
Thy tenderness for me? an eye still beamed
With love?"

THOMSON.

THE arrival of Lord Lindore brought an influx of visitors to Beech Park; and, in the unceasing round of amusement that went on, Mary found herself completely overlooked. She therefore gladly took advantage of her insignificance to pay frequent visits to Mrs. Lennox, and easily prevailed with Lady Juliana to allow her

to spend a week there occasionally. In this way, the acquaintance soon ripened into the warmest affection on both sides. The day seemed doubly dark to Mrs. Lennox that was not brightened by Mary's presence; and Mary felt all the drooping energies of her heart revive in the delight of administering to the happiness of another.

Mrs. Lennox was one of those gentle, amiable beings, who engage our affections far more powerfully than many possessed of higher attributes. Her understanding was not strong—neither had it been highly cultivated according to the ideas of the present time; but she had a benevolence of heart, and a guileless simplicity of thought, that shamed the pride of wit, and pomp of learning. Bereft of all external enjoyments, and destitute of great mental resources, it was retrospection and futurity that gilded the dark evening of her days, and shed their light on the dreary realities

of life. She loved to recal the remembrance of her children—to tell of their infant beauties, their growing virtues—and to retrace scenes of past felicity which memory loves to treasure in the heart.

"Oh! none but a mother can tell," she would exclaim, "the bitterness of those tears which fall from a mother's eyes!—all other sorrows seem natural, but—God forgive me!—surely it is not natural that the old should weep for the young. Oh! when I saw myself surrounded by my children, little did I think that death was so soon to seal their eyes! Sorrow mine! and yet methinks I would rather have suffered all than have stood in the world a lonely being.—Yes—my children revered His power and believed in His name, and, thanks to His mercy, I feel assured they are now angels in heaven! Here," taking some papers from a writing-box, "my Louisa speaks to me even from the tomb!—These are the words she wrote but a few hours before her death.

Read them to me; for it is not every voice I can bear to hear uttering her last thoughts."—Mary read as follows:

FOR EVER GONE.

For ever gone! oh, chilling sound!
  That tolls the knell of hope and joy!
Potent with torturing pang to wound,
  But not in mercy to destroy.

For ever gone! What words of grief—
  Replete with wild mysterious woe!
The Christian kneels to seek relief—
  A Saviour died——It is not so.

For a brief space we sojourn here,
  And life's rough path we journey o'er;
Thus was it with the friend so dear,
  That is not lost, but sped before.

For ever gone! oh, madness wild
  Dwells in that drear and Atheist doom!
But death of horror is despoiled,
  When heaven shines forth beyond the tomb.

For ever gone! oh, dreadful fate!
  Go visit nature—gather thence
The symbols of man's happier state,
  Which speak to every mortal sense.

The leafless spray, the withered flower,
Alike with man, owns death's embrace;
But bustling forth, in summer hour,
Prepare anew to run life's race.

And shall it be, that man alone
Dies, never more to rise again?
Of all creation, highest one,
Created but to live in vain?

For ever gone! oh, dire despair!—
Look to the heavens, the earth, the sea—
Go, read a Saviour's promise there—
Go, heir of Immortality!

From such communings as these the selfish would have turned with indifference; but Mary's generous heart was ever open to the overflowings of the wounded spirit. She had never been accustomed to lavish the best feelings of her nature on frivolous pursuits, or fictitious distresses; but had early been taught to consecrate them to the best, the most ennobling purposes of humanity—even to the comforting of the weary soul—the binding of the bruised heart. Yet Mary was no rigid moralist. She loved amusement as the *amusement* of an imperfect existence, though her good

sense, and still better principles, taught her to reject it as the *business* of an immortal being.

Several weeks passed away, during which Mary had been an almost constant inmate at Rose Hall; but the day of Lady Emily's *fête* arrived, and with something of hope and expectation fluttering at her heart, she anticipated her *début* in the ball-room. She repaired to the breakfast-table of her venerable friend, with even more than usual hilarity; but, upon entering the apartment, her gaiety fled; for she was struck with the emotion visible on the countenance of Mrs. Lennox: her meek, but tearful eyes, were raised to heaven, and her hands were crossed on her bosom, as if to subdue the agitation of her heart. Her faithful attendant stood by her with an open letter in her hand.

Mary flew towards her; and as her light step and soft accents met her ear, she extended her arms towards her.

"Mary, my child, where are you," exclaimed she, as she pressed her with convulsive eagerness to her heart— "My son! —my Charles!—to-morrow I shall see him —See him! oh, God help me! I shall never see him more!" And she wept in all the agony of contending emotions, suddenly and powerfully excited.

"But you will hear him—you will hold him to your heart—you will be conscious that he is beside you," said Mary.

"Yes, thank God! I shall once more hear the voice of a living child! Oh, how often do those voices ring in my heart, that are all hushed in the grave! I am used to it now—but to think of his returning to this wildernes! When last he left it, he had father, brothers, sisters—and to find all gone!"

"Indeed it will be a sad return," said the old housekeeper, as she wiped her eyes; "for the Colonel doated on his sister, and she on him, and his brothers too! Dearly

they all loved one another. How in this very room have I seen them chace each other up and down in their pretty plays, with their papa's cap and sword, and say they would be soldiers!"

Mary motioned the good woman to be silent; then turning to Mrs. Lennox, she sought to soothe her into composure, and turned, as she always did, the bright side of the picture to view, by dwelling on the joy her son would experience in seeing her. Mrs. Lennox shook her head mournfully.

"Alas! he cannot joy in seeing me, such as I am. I have too long concealed from him my dreary doom: he knows not that these poor eyes are sealed in darkness! Oh! he will seek to read a mother's fondness there, and he will find all cold and silent."

"But he will also find you resigned—even contented," said Mary, while her tears dropped on the hand she held to her lips.

"Yes; God knows, I do not repine at his will. It is not for myself these tears fall; but my son. How will he bear to behold the mother he so loved and honoured, now blind, bereft, and helpless!" And the wounds of her heart seemed to bleed afresh at the excitement of even its happiest emotions—the return of a long absent, much-loved son.

Mary exerted all the powers of her understanding, all the tenderness of her heart, to dispel the mournful images that pressed on the mind of her friend; but she found it was not so much her *arguments* as her *presence* that produced that effect; and to leave her in her present situation seemed impossible. In the agitation of her spirits, she had wholly forgotten the occasion that called for Mary's absence, and she implored her to remain with her till the arrival of her son, with an earnestness that was irresistible.

The thoughts of her cousin's displeasure, should she absent herself upon such an occasion, caused Mary to hesitate; yet her feelings would not allow her to name the cause.

"How unfeeling it would sound to talk of balls at such a time," thought she; "what a painful contrast must it present: surely Lady Emily will not blame me, and no one will miss me——" And, in the ardour of her feelings, she promised to remain. Yet she sighed as she sent off her excuse, and thought of the pleasures she had renounced; but the sacrifice made, the regrets were soon past; and she devoted herself entirely to soothing the agitated spirits of her venerable friend.

It is perhaps the simplest and most obvious truth, skilfully administered, that, in the season of affliction, produces the most salutary effects upon our mind. Mary was certainly no logician, and all that she could

say might have been said by another; but there is something in the voice and manner that carries an irresistible influence along with it—something that tells us our sorrows are felt and understood, not coldly seen and heard. Mary's well-directed exertions were repaid with success; she read, talked, played, and sung, not in her gayest manner; but in that subdued strain which harmonized with the feelings, while it won upon the attention, and she had at length the satisfaction of seeing the object of her solicitude, restored to her usual state of calm confiding acquiescence.

"God bless you, my dear Mary!" said she, as they were about to separate for the night; "He only can repay you for the good you have done me this day!"

"Ah!" thought Mary, as she tenderly embraced her, "such a blessing is worth a dozen balls!"

At that moment the sound of a carriage was heard, and an unusual bustle took place

below; but scarcely had they time to notice it, ere the door flew open, and Mrs. Lennox found herself locked in the arms of her son.

For some minutes the tide of feeling was too strong for utterance, and "My mother!" "My son!" were the only words that either could articulate. At length, raising his head, Colonel Lennox fixed his eyes on his mother's face, with a gaze of deep and fearful inquiry—but no returning glance spoke there. With that mournful vacuity, peculiar to the blind, which is a thousand times more touching than all the varied expression of the living orb, she continued to regard the vacant space which imagination had filled, with the image she sought in vain to behold.

At this confirmation of his worst fears, a shade of the deepest anguish overspread the visage of her son. He raised his eyes, as in agony, to heaven—then threw himself on his mother's bosom; and as Mary hurried

from the apartment, she heard the sob which burst from his manly heart, as he exclaimed, "My dear mother, do I indeed find you thus!"

CHAPTER XXII.

"There is more complacency in the negligence of some men, than in what is called the good breeding of others; and the little absences of the heart are often more interesting and engaging than the punctilious attention of a thousand professed sacrificers to the graces."

MACKENZIE.

POWERFUL emotions are the certain levellers of ordinary feelings. When Mary met Colonel Lennox in the breakfast-room the following morning, he accosted her, not with the ceremony of a stranger, but with the frankness of a heart careless of common forms; and spoke of his mother with indications of sensibility, which he vainly strove to repress. Mary knew that she had sought

to conceal her real situation from him; but it seemed a vague suspicion of the truth had crossed his mind, and having, with difficulty, obtained a short leave of absence, he had hastened to have either his hopes or fears realized.

"And, now that I know the worst," said he, "I know it only to deplore it. Far from alleviating, my presence seems rather to aggravate my poor mother's misfortune. Oh! it is heart-rending to see the strivings of these longing eyes to look upon the face of those she loves!"

"Ah! thought Mary, "were they to behold that face now, how changed would it appear!" as she contrasted it with the portrait that hung immediately over the head of the original. The one in all the brightness of youth—the radiant eyes—the rounded cheek—the fair open brow—spoke only of hope, and health, and joy. Those eyes were now dimmed by sorrow; the cheek was wasted with toil; the brow

was clouded by cares. Yet, "as it is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express,"* so there is something superior to the mere charms of form and colour; and an air of high-toned feeling, of mingled vivacity and sensibility, gave a grandeur to the form, and an expression to the countenance, which more than atoned for the want of youth's more brilliant attributes.

At least so thought Mary; but her comparisons were interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Lennox. Her son flew towards her, and taking her arm from that of her attendant, led her to her seat, and sought to render her those little offices which her helplessness required.

"My dear Charles," said she, with a smile, as he tried to adjust her cushions, "your hands have not been used to this work. Your arm is my best support, but a gentler hand must smooth my pillow.

* Lord Bacon.

Mary, my love, where are you? Give me your hand." Then placing it in that of her son—" Many a tear has this hand wiped from your mother's eyes!"

Mary, blushing deeply, hastily withdrew it. She felt it as a sort of appeal to Colonel Lennox's feelings; and a sense of wounded delicacy made her shrink from being thus recommended to his gratitude. But Colonel Lennox seemed too much absorbed in his own painful reflections to attach such a meaning to his mother's words; and though they excited him to regard Mary for a moment with peculiar interest, yet, in a little while, he relapsed into the mournful reverie from which he had been roused.

Colonel Lennox was evidently not a shew-off character. He seemed superior to the mere vulgar aim of making himself agreeable—an aim which has much oftener its source in vanity than in benevolence. Yet he exerted himself to meet his mother's

cheerfulness; though as often as he looked at her, or raised his eyes to the youthful group that hung before them, his changing hue and quivering lip betrayed the anguish he strove to hide.

Breakfast ended, Mary rose to prepare for her departure, in spite of the solicitations of her friend, that she should remain till the following day.

"Surely, my dear Mary," said she, in an imploring accent, "you will not refuse to bestow one day of happiness upon me?—and it is *such* a happiness to see my Charles and you together. I little thought that ever I should have been so blessed. Ah! I begin to think God has yet some good in store for my last days! Do not then leave me just when I am beginning to taste of joy!"—And she clung to her with that pathetic look which Mary had ever found irresistible.

But, upon this occasion, she steeled her heart against all supplication. It was the

first time she had ever turned from the entreaty of old age or infirmity; and those only who have lived in the habitual practice of administering to the happiness of others, can conceive how much it costs the generous heart to resist even the weaknesses of those it loves. But Mary felt she had already sacrificed too much to affection, and she feared the reproaches and ridicule that awaited her return to Beech Park. She therefore gently, though steadily, adhered to her resolution, only softening it by a promise of returning soon.

"What an angel goes there!" exclaimed Mrs. Lennox to her son, as Mary left the room to prepare for her departure. "Ah! Charles, could I but hope to see her yours!"

Colonel Lennox smiled—"That must be when I am an angel myself then. A poor weather-beaten soldier like me must be satisfied with something less."

"But is she not a lovely creature?" asked his mother, with some solicitude.

"Angels, you know, are always fair," replied Colonel Lennox, laughingly, trying to parry this attack upon his heart.

"Ah! Charles, that is not being serious! But young people now are different from what they were in my day. There is no such thing as falling in love now, you are all so cautious."

And the good old Lady's thoughts reverted to the time when the gay and gallant Captain Lennox had fallen desperately in love with her, as she danced a minuet in a blue satin sack, and Bologna hat, at a country ball.

"You forget, my dear mother, what a knack I had in falling in love ten years ago. Since then, I confess I have got rather out of the way of it; but a little, a very little practice, I am sure, will make me as expert as ever;—and then I promise

you shall have no cause to complain of my caution."

Mrs. Lennox sighed, and shook her head. She had long cherished the hope, that if ever her son came home, it would be to fall in love with and marry her beloved Mary; and she had dwelt upon this favourite scheme till it had taken entire possession of her mind. In the simplicity of her heart, she also imagined that it would greatly help to accelerate the event, were she to suggest the idea to her son, as she had no doubt but that the object of her affections must necessarily become the idol of his. So little did she know of human nature, that the very means she used to accomplish her purpose were the most effectual she could have contrived to defeat it. Such is man, that his pride revolts from all attempts to influence his affections. The weak and the undiscerning, indeed, are often led to "choose love by another's eyes;" but the lofty and independent spirit loves

to create for itself those feelings, which lose half their charms when their source is not in the depths of their own heart.

It was with no slight mortification that Mrs. Lennox saw Mary depart without having made the desired impression on the heart of her son; or, what was still more to be feared, of his having secured himself a place in her favour. But, again and again, she made Mary repeat her promise of returning soon, and spending some days with her. "And then," thought she, "things will all come right. When they live together, and see each other constantly, they cannot possibly avoid loving each other, and all will be as it should be. God grant I may live to see it!"

And hope softened the pang of disappointment.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> "Qui vous a pu plonger dans cette humeur chagrine,
> A-t-on par quelque edit réformé la cuisine?"
>
> BOILEAU.

MARY'S inexperienced mind expected to find, on her return to Beech Park, some vestige of the pleasures of the preceding night—some shadows, at least, of gaiety, to shew what happiness she had sacrificed—what delight her friends had enjoyed; but, for the first time, she beheld the hideous aspect of departed pleasure. Drooping evergreens, dying lamps, dim transparencies, and faded flowers, met her view

as she crossed the hall; while the public rooms were covered with dust from the chalked floors, and wax from the droppings of the candles. Every thing, in short, looked tawdry and forlorn. Nothing was in its place—nothing looked as it used to do—and she stood amazed at the disagreeable metamorphose all things had undergone.

Hearing some one approach, she turned, and beheld Dr. Redgill enter.

"So—it's only you, Miss Mary!" exclaimed he, in a tone of chagrin. "I was in hopes it was some of the women-servants. 'Pon my soul, it's disgraceful to think that, in this house, there is not a woman stirring yet! I have sent five messages, by my man, to let Mrs. Brown know that I have been waiting for my breakfast these two hours; but this confounded ball has turned every thing upside down!—You are come to a pretty scene," continued he, looking round with a mixture of fury and contempt,—"a very pretty scene! 'Pon my

honour, I blush to see myself standing here! Just look at these rags!" kicking a festoon of artificial roses that had fallen to the ground. "Can any thing be more despicable?—and to think that rational creatures in possession of their senses should take pleasure in the sight of such trumpery!—'Pon my soul, I—I—declare it confounds me! I really used to think Lady Emily (for this is all her doing) had some sense—but such a display of folly as this!"

"Pshaw!" said Mary, "it is not fair in us to stand here analysing the dregs of gaiety after the essence is gone. I daresay this was a very brilliant scene last night."

"Brilliant scene, indeed!" repeated the Doctor, in a most wrathful accent: "I really am amazed—I—yes—brilliant enough—if you mean, that there was a glare of light, enough to blind the devil.—I thought my eyes would have been put out, the short time I staid; indeed, I don't think

this one has recovered it yet," advancing a fierce blood-shot eye almost close to Mary's. "Don't you think it looks a *leettle* inflamed, Miss Mary?"

Mary gave it as her opinion that it did.

"Well, that's all I've got by this business; but I never was consulted about it. I thought it my duty, however, to give a *leettle* hint to the Earl, when the thing was proposed. 'My Lord,' says I, 'your house is your own; you have a right to do what you please with it; burn it; pull it down; make a purgatory of it; but, for God's sake, don't give a ball in it!' The ball was given, and you see the consequences. A ball! and what's a ball, that a whole family should be thrown into disorder for it?"

"I daresay to those who are engaged in it, it is a very delightful amusement at the time."

"Delightful fiddlestick! 'Pon my soul, I'm surprised at you, Miss Mary! I thought your staying away was a pretty strong proof

of your good sense; but I—hem! Delightful amusement, indeed! to see human creatures twirling one another about all night like so many monkies—making perfect mountebanks of themselves. Really, I look upon dancing as a most degrading and a most immoral practice. 'Pon my soul, I—*I* couldn't have the face to waltz, I know; and it's all on account of this delightful amusement," with a convulsive shake of his chin, "that things are in this state—myself kept waiting for my breakfast two hours and a half beyond my natural time: not that I mind myself at all—that's neither here nor there—and if I was the only sufferer, I'm sure I should be the very last to complain—but I own it vexes—it distresses me. 'Pon my honour, I can't stand seeing a whole family going to destruction!"

The Doctor's agitation was so great, that Mary really pitied him.

"It is rather hard that you cannot get any breakfast, since you had no enjoyment

in the ball," said she. "I daresay, were I to apply to Mrs. Brown, she would trust me with her keys; and I shall be happy to officiate for her in making your tea."

"Thank you, Miss Mary," replied the Doctor coldly. "I'm very much obliged to you. It is really a very polite offer on your part; but—hem!—you might have observed, that I never take tea to breakfast. I keep that for the evening: most people, I know, do the reverse, but they're in the wrong. Coffee is too nutritive for the evening. The French themselves are in an error there. That woman, that Mrs. Brown knows what I like; in fact, she's the only woman I ever met with, who could make coffee—coffee that I thought drinkable. She knows that—and she knows that I like it to a moment—and yet—"

Here the Doctor blew his nose, and Mary thought she perceived a tear twinkle in his eye. Finding she was incapable of administering consolation, she was about to

quit the room, when the Doctor, recovering himself, called after her.

"If you happen to be going the way of Mrs. Brown's room, Miss Mary, I would take it very kind, if you could just contrive to let her know what time of day it is; and that I have not tasted a mouthful of any thing since last night at twelve o'clock, when I took a *leettle* morsel of supper in my own room."

Mary took advantage of the deep sigh that followed to make her escape; and as she crossed the vestibule, she descried the Doctor's man, hurrying along with a coffee pot, which she had no doubt would pour consolation into his master's soul.

As Mary was aware of her mother's dislike to introduce her into company, she flattered herself she had for once done something to merit her approbation, by having absented herself on this occasion. But Mary was a novice in the ways of temper, and had yet to learn, that to study to please,

and to succeed, are very different things. Lady Juliana had been decidedly averse to her appearing at the ball, but she was equally disposed to take offence at her having staid away; besides, she had not been pleased herself, and her glass told her she looked jaded and ill. She was, therefore, as her maid expressed it, in a most particular bad temper; and Mary had to endure reproaches, of which she could only make out, that although she ought not to have been present, she was much to blame in having been absent. Lady Emily's indignation was in a different style. There was a heat and energy in her anger, that never failed to overwhelm her victim at once. But it was more tolerable than the tedious, fretful, ill humour of the other; and after she had fairly exhausted herself in invective, and ridicule, and insolence, and drawn tears from her cousin's eyes by the bitterness of her language, she heartily embraced her—vowed she liked her better than any

body in the world—and that she was a fool for minding any thing she said to her.

"I assure you," said she "I was only tormenting you a little, and you must own you deserve that; but you can't suppose I meant half what I said; that is a *bêtise* I can't conceive you guilty of. You see I am much more charitable in my conclusions than you. You have no scruple in thinking me a wretch, though I'm too good natured to set you down for a fool. Come, brighten up, and I'll tell you all about the ball.—How I hate it, were it only for having made your nose red! But really, the thing in itself was detestable. Job himself must have gone mad at the provocations I met with. In the first place, I had set my heart upon introducing you with *eclât*, and instead of which you preferred psalm singing with Mrs. Lennox, or sentiment with her son—I don't know which. In the next place, there was a dinner in Bath, that kept away some of the best men; then, after

waiting an hour and a half for Frederick to begin the ball with Lady Charlotte M. I went myself to his room, and found him lounging by the fire with a volume of Rousseau in his hand, not dressed, and quite surprised that I should think his presence at all necessary; and when he did make his *entré*, conceive my feelings at seeing him single out Lady Placid as his partner! I certainly would rather have seen him waltzing with a hyena! I don't believe he knew or cared whom he danced with—unless, perhaps, it had been Adelaide, but she was engaged—and, by-the-bye, there certainly is some sort of a *liaison* there—how it will end I don't know—it depends upon themselves—for I'm sure the course of their love may run smooth if they choose—I know nothing to interrupt it. Perhaps, indeed, it may become stagnate from that very circumstance—for you know, or perhaps you don't know, 'there is no spirit under heaven that works with such delusion.'"

Mary would have felt rather uneasy a
this intelligence, had she believed it pos
sible for her sister to be in love; but sh
had ever appeared to her so insensible t
every tender emotion and generous affec
tion, that she could not suppose even lov
itself was capable of making any impres
sion on her heart. When, however, sh
saw them together, she began to waver i
her opinion. Adelaide, silent and disdain
ful to others, was now gay and enchantin
to Lord Lindore, and looked as if she tr
umphed in the victory she had already wo
It was not so easy to ascertain the natu
of Lord Lindore's feelings towards his cou
sin, and time only developed them.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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